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A SITUATIONAL-INTERPRETIVE STUDY OF A GRADE SEVEN BILINGUAL CLASSROOM

by

Mary Joan Graham

A THESIS

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submitted by Mary Joan Graham in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

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ABSTRACT

The present study explores students' perceptions of their language acquisition process which is taking place in a grade seven French bilingual classroom in an English language majority environment. The study first describes the school and classroom environment in which students are immersed, then attempts to interpret the meaning of attitudes expressed by individual participants in terms of their significance for the immersion approach in bilingual schooling.

In order to gain an understanding of the bilingual program environment at the Junior High level and to determine the type of data which young adolescents would be able to provide through interviews a pilot project was undertaken in three schools of the Edmonton Public Board in the spring of 1982. Findings of the pilot project indicated that student and teacher groups would generate the most relevant data regarding school experiences and that a study attempting to understand this setting should ground its research in a specific classroom context. Accordingly, one of the three schools involved in the pilot was selected as the research site for this study, initiated in October, 1982.

The methodology employed in this study included non-participant observation in the classroom and semi-structured, in-depth interviews with students and teachers. The two week period of observation preceding the interviews was designed to familiarize

the researcher with the structure of daily classroom activities and dominant language interaction patterns as well as to establish a relationship of trust and cooperation between the researcher and the participants. Teacher interviews were included as part of the research procedures in order to provide a more comprehensive portrait of the bilingual classroom under study.

Student interviews, approximately thirty minutes in length, were scheduled in November. Twenty-one students from a class of thirty-two participated and were interviewed individually or in small groups. Students were selected first on a volunteer basis, then randomly according to ability levels. All interview sessions were recorded, then transcribed by the researcher. Interpretive summaries of the sessions were prepared and both documents shown to respondents for comment and verification. Teacher interviews, scheduled in the first week of December were one hour in length and were verified in a similar manner.

The portrait of the grade seven bilingual class which emerges from this study suggests that students associate their language acquisition experiences with specific teachers and subjects; that students' productive skills in French are less actively engaged than might be anticipated and that the dual linguistic nature of the school played a part in the amount of French used during the day. Specifically, students made greater use of English with peers and while carrying out study projects than had been expected.

These findings suggest a need for the development of procedures to encourage more productive use of French among

students, a need to enrich the language environment of bilingual schools and a need to continue the search for more and better teaching resources at this level.

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"Far from harboring the secret of
the being of the world, language
is itself a world, itself a being."

Merleau-Ponty

The Visible and the Invisible

A SITUATIONAL-INTERPRETIVE STUDY OF A GRADE SEVEN BILINGUAL CLASSROOM

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Opening Statement

The present study describes and interprets students' perceptions of their second language acquisition process in a grade seven French bilingual classroom. The study is qualitative in nature and employs both non-participant classroom observation and interviewing procedures to gain an understanding of the meaning of this experience for the students involved. In order to talk about experience in a significant way, it is vital to situate classroom events within a specific context. Hence, detailed descriptions of the learning and teaching activities which took place, the teachers' interpretations of their task together with the characteristics of the broader school setting also form an integral part of the study.

Rationale for the Study

Bruck and Swain (1976), two prominent researchers in the field of bilingual education, have characterized much of the research

conducted on immersion and bilingual programs to date as having a strong emphasis on "product" rather than "process." For example, while empirically based studies have measured achievement in French and in other subject areas of students participating in French immersion programs, we still do not know very much about what actually goes on in these classrooms. Questions relating to the implementation of specific language activities, their effect on students' use of the second language (hereafter referred to as L2), the impact of the program on students' lives outside of school and students' perceptions about the personal value of the bilingual program need to be explored further in Western Canadian contexts. While some of the issues have been treated in questionnaire-based studies in Eastern Canada, few, if any interview-based studies exist. Answers to these questions are vital to an understanding of the extent to which the aims of bilingual education are being met by present programs.

Background to the Study

Research shows that students in immersion programs attain much higher competency levels in French than students in other, less intensive French-as-a-second-language programs, frequently referred to in the literature as FSL programs. Many of the evaluative studies corroborating this finding are summarized in a recent publication of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, entitled Bilingual Education in Ontario: a Decade of Research (Swain and Lapkin, eds. 1981). Understandably, goals for students in

immersion programs are also significantly higher than for students in FSL programs. Some expectations for immersion students in the second language include the following (Stanutz, 1974, p. 143): being able to meet everyday communicative needs reasonably well; being able to accept further training, both professional and academic in the second language; being able to work comfortably in either language; and being able to live comfortably within either speech community. Since language programs, however, are always situated within specific socio-cultural contexts, it is relevant to ask whether some of these expectations can reasonably be met in a majority anglophone speech community distant from a native-speaker community in the second language. Some researchers such as Merrill Swain, are calling for redefinition of the goals and expectations of immersion programs based on the contextual realities within which such programs are often found, as suggested by the remark quoted below (Swain, 1981, p. 486 - 487):

> Thus the expectation that the students should be able 'to participate easily in conversation' needs considerable refinement. If the expectation is that they should be able to participate easily in conversation without noticeable grammatical and lexical errors then either the expectation needs to be revised downwards, or some major changes need to be made in the program.

In order to reconsider expectations of immersion programs, it will be important to be able to describe and interpret students' views about their acquisition process and to place their views in the context of a specific set of classroom experiences. A situation-

al interpretive study of a bilingual classroom and the individuals who dwell within it may have important pedagogic implications for a redefinition both of the immersion approach and of the second language acquisition process which takes place in this setting. This study is a preliminary attempt to understand both the language process and the students' relationship to the process as experienced in a specific classroom at the Junior High level.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this situational-interpretive study is to come to an understanding of how students in a grade seven French bilingual classroom view their second language acquisition process. Student comments will be carefully situated within a particular set of classroom activities observed and described during the first part of the study. By comparing the students' opinions about their experiences within the structure of observed classroom activities as well as with teacher opinions about their role as bilingual educators, it may be possible to describe the way in which language is presented to students and the relevance of this presentation for the general goals of bilingual education.

The Research Questions

The study will address the following research questions in the order in which they are stated below:

1. What kinds of learning activities are typically carried out in a bilingual classroom to facilitate the second-language acquisition process?
2. How do the choice and organization of the learning activities affect students' communication in French?

3a. How do students view their language acquisition process and the bilingual program as a whole?

3b. How do teachers view students' acquisition of French and the effectiveness of the program in furthering student acquisition?

4. What comparisons may be drawn from an analysis of students' and teachers' views of the language acquisition process ongoing in the bilingual classroom under study?
5. What are the implications of views represented in the study for the pedogogy of second-language teaching and the aims of bilingual education?

Procedures for Conducting the Research

To interpret properly students' perceptions about their second language experience in a bilingual school setting, it was necessary to observe the kinds of activities being carried out and to describe their structure in detail. Accordingly, after a research site was selected, a period of non-participant observation was planned prior to the interviewing activity which was to form the second part of the data gathering procedures. Besides describing as fully as

possible the nature of class activities, the non-participant observation period was intended to familiarize the researcher with all aspects of the school environment and to establish herself as a regular classroom figure in whom students could place a reasonable amount of confidence and trust. (A good working relationship between the researcher and the students was seen as being essential to the collection of meaningful interview data.) The interview sessions were to be recorded and conversations transcribed in full. Interpretive studies were then to be prepared on the basis of the transcribed texts. Both the transcriptions and the interpretive summaries were then to be shown to the subjects, who would comment on the representation of the session, stating whether they were in agreement with what was extrapolated and providing any necessary corrections at that time. The same procedure was planned for the teacher data. Interview data were to be compiled according to the categories found in the protocol materials and compared across the two groups. Recurring themes in each set of data would form the basis of the bilingual classroom portrait found in the summary chapter. Implications of the emerging portrait of a bilingual classroom, together with recommendations for further research, were to conclude the study.

Definition of Terms

Bilingual Education

"Bilingual education [is] schooling provided fully or partly in a second language with the object in view of making students proficient in the second language while, at the same time, maintaining and developing their proficiency in the first language and fully guaranteeing their educational development."
(H. H. Stern, "Introduction" in M. Swain ed., Bilingual Schooling, Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1972, 1).

Bilingual Program

Bilingual or immersion programs are classified according to the amount of time spent on second-language learning. They may begin in early elementary, late elementary, or junior high school and for the first few years 70 per cent or more of the instruction time is in the second language, tapering off into a 50-50 division between English and the second language. One or more subjects are taught in the second language along with a language course. An immersion program enables the student to function in all situations common to a native speaker of the age, experience, and educational level of the learner.
(Based on D. Parker, "French as a Second Language," position paper Edmonton, University of Alberta, 1977, 1).

Early French Immersion/Bilingual (English-French) Program

Objective of the Program

"The objective of the Early French Immersion/Bilingual Program is to provide children with the advantages of the regular school programs plus functional fluency in French. This will be accomplished by teaching some subjects in English and some in French."
(Second Language Programs 1982-1983, Edmonton: Edmonton Public Schools, p. 11).

Functional Fluency

Functional fluency signifies the language learner's ability to use the second language successfully in common social and common work/study situations.

Learner Language

Learner language (sometimes referred to as interlanguage) relates to the productive use of the second language by learners in classrooms and school settings. Learner language displays characteristics of both the second or target language and of the students' mother tongue. These characteristics are clearly discernable in communicative acts. Learner language is dynamic in that its nature changes as new understanding of the target language is acquired.

Language Transfer

"Language transfer is the apparent application of NL [(native language)] rules to TL [(target language)]. In other words, language transfer is the process by which the learner constructs a sentence (or part of a sentence) in the TL [(target language)] in the same way as he would if he were to express the same meaning in his NL [(native language)]."
(Larry Selinker, 1975, p. 143).

Communicative Competence

"Communicative competence may be defined as the ability to function in a truly communicative setting - that is, in a dynamic exchange in which linguistic competence must adapt itself to the total informational input, both linguistic and paralinguistic, of one or more interlocutors."
(Savignon, 1972, p. 8).

Linguistic Competence

Linguistic competence assumes a mastery of the language's grammatical structure resulting in the speaker's ability to produce grammatically correct sentences.

Nonparticipant Observation

"... In nonparticipant observation, the observer does not take part in the activities being studied or pretend to be a participant in them."
(Long, 1980, p. 24).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Before beginning to review the literature in this area it may be useful to provide a brief description of the major characteristics of some of the different types of second language programs.

Definition of the Immersion Approach

In order to interpret accurately the literature on French immersion programs it will be important to define the term immersion and to distinguish it from other less intensive French programs. These other programs are frequently referred to as French-as-a-Second-Language or FSL programs for short.

The first distinguishing feature separating immersion programs from FSL programs relates to the amount of time devoted to instruction in French. In early French immersion programs (which are the programs we are concerned with in this study), instruction in French begins at kindergarten or grade one for one hundred percent of the time, gradually decreasing to fifty percent at the Junior High stage. Exposure time to the second language in FSL programs may vary with the school district, but it constitutes a much smaller percentage of the total instruction time, typically thirty to fifty minutes daily. In addition, FSL programs are

generally begun at a later stage in the student's school career.

The second distinguishing feature of immersion programs is their focus on other subject matters besides French, including, for example, Social Studies, Science and Mathematics. During instruction in these subjects in French the teaching emphasis is placed on communication of subject matter rather than the formal aspects of language analysis and study. For this reason, immersion has been described as a basically "functional" approach to language learning emphasizing much more productive use of the second language on the part of students in a variety of communicative contexts. Although the gap separating immersion and FSL programs regarding emphasis on functional aspects of language learning has been fairly wide in the past, recent revisions to FSL curricula suggest that this gap is narrowing. FSL curricula are showing a greater attention to the functional aspects of language learning through development of situational contexts. Such developments foster a greater productive use of the second language by students in more expanded, unstructured situations in these classes.

What seems clear, nonetheless, is that the earlier initial and sustained exposure of immersion students to both formal and functional aspects of language learning through diverse subject matters creates higher levels of competency in French for those students than for those in FSL programs. As a result the variety and complexity of communicative acts in immersion contexts is greater than in FSL contexts. Students' capabilities in FSL programs are still rather restricted owing to their lower levels of exposure to the language.

Having attempted to define the immersion approach by means of two major characteristics of "time" and greater capacity for "functional" learning, we shall now turn to a review of the literature based on the effects of this type of approach on students. Effects on learners have been divided into four categories: cognitive development, attitude formation, linguistic competencies and optimum age. The review concludes with a consideration of some of the limitations and possible omissions of immersion research conducted to date.

Cognitive Effects of Immersion Programs on Children's Learning

One of the earliest studies dealing with the cognitive effects of bilingual schooling is Balkan's work, Les Effets du bilinguisme francais-anglais sur les aptitudes intellectuelles, published in 1970. This study claims to show that bilinguals demonstrate a greater degree of flexibility in thinking skills than their unilingual counterparts. The rationale given is that code-switching from one language to another causes the individual to change perspectives and develop as a result greater resources for re-organizing and regrouping information presented to him.

In a longitudinal study based on the St. Lambert Experiment in Bilingual Education, Lambert and Tucker (1972) claim to have evidence for a positive transfer of skills across languages. The bilingual child's vocabulary and understanding of complex linguistic functions is increased by a process of comparing and constrasting the

two languages. In a similar way Bain (1974) provides experimental evidence to show that bilinguals have a significant cognitive advantage over unilinguals in sensitivity to emotional expression. Two assumptions of Bain's study are first, that language as a system plays a central role in the apprehending and transforming of certain logical operations, and second, that language plays a central role in the apprehending and transforming of certain emotive functions.

Cummins and Gulutsan (1974) report results in their study consistent with those of Peal and Lambert (1962). According to these researchers, bilinguals tend to perform better on measures of concept formation, verbal capabilities and originality. These research findings all reflect a postive relationship between bilingualism and cognition.

In an article entitled "The Cognitive Development of Children in Bilingual Programs," Cummins (1978) outlines two types of bilingualism: additive and subtractive, each based on different learning environments. His terminology is borrowed from the work of Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa, who researched the schooling environment of Finnish children in Sweden. Situations of 'additive bilingualism' imply that the child's first language or mother tongue is dominant and in no danger of a replacement by the second language; the bilingual is adding another socially relevant language to his repertoire of skills. Subtractive bilingual situations imply immersion in the second language social context before adequate competency has been achieved in the first language. The mother tongue may then be devalued in favour of the second language which is

generally speaking that of the majority cultural group. A state of semi-lingualism may result from this situation in which the individual fails to achieve communicative fluency sufficient for his needs in either language. Under these circumstances, negative cognitive effects may result. Following from his discussion of additive and subtractive bilingualism, Cummins derives two hypotheses related to bilingualism and cognition. The "developmental interdependence hypothesis" assumes that the development of skills in the second language is contingent upon the level of competency attained in the first language at the time of exposure to the second language. Therefore, the bilingual child's first language has functional significance in the development processes and should be actively promoted by the school. The "threshold hypothesis" assumes that threshold levels of linguistic competence must be attained in both languages in order to avoid cognitive disadvantages and to allow the beneficial aspects of bilingualism to influence cognitive growth.

Before terminating this discussion of the cognitive effects of bilingual schooling, it should be noted that some researchers, such as MacNab (1978), are more sceptical about the positive relationship between bilingualism and cognition described in selected studies thus far. They indicate that some longitudinal studies exist whose results contradict the cognitive enhancement hypothesis resulting from bilingual education. In addition, these researchers suggest that problems of sampling and research design have affected the results of some of the comparative studies in this

field. For these reasons they are unwilling to admit a positive and direct relationship between cognitive enhancement and bilingual schooling.

Research on Attitudes, Aptitude and Motivation

Much of the research undertaken in this area has compared groups of students in core or extended[1] French programs to those in immersion or bilingual programs. In their book Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning, (1972) Gardner and Lambert claim that the successful second-language learner must be prepared psychologically to adopt various aspects of behavior characteristics of members of the second language group. This type of orientation towards learning a second language likely develops from a deep attitudinal base. Gardner and Smythe (1976) have identified two types of orientations in language learners which they have labelled the "integrative" orientation and the "instrumentalist" orientation. These orientations are part of the same scale and form opposite ends of an attitudinal continuum. The integrative orientation has at its root the desire for social interaction with members of the second language cultural group and includes a complex set of variables favorable to second language learning. The

---

[1]Extended French programs provide instruction in the French language plus one other subject area such as Social Studies, Art or Music. The programs offer more contact with the language thus enabling students to utilize their basic skills in other meaningful situations but they are not so intensive as immersion programs.

instrumentalist orientation is rooted in the desire to seek better career opportunities and social standing through the acquisition of a second language. Attitudinal aspects of the integrative orientation are influenced by a wide variety of factors, such as socio-cultural milieu, age and previous experience with the language, among others. The integrative motivation appears both to orient the student to pursue his study of the second language and to facilitate the development of communication skills. However a positive attitude is a prerequisite for the development of such skills. Motivation is therefore at least as important as attitude for learner success in second language study. In a discussion concerning social factors as they relate to second language acquisition and bilinguality Gardner (1977) states that empirical evidence is generally lacking in the research to develop any positive co-relation between the two. The construct of language aptitude is conceptually distinct from attitudes and motivation, but both have been linked together in the literature. Attitudinal factors affect motivation which in turn bears upon achievement in second language acquisition. In an article published in 1976, Gardner, Smythe, Clément and Gliksman assert that motivation is more important than language aptitude for determining individual differences in achievement in the early stages of second language acquisition, but by contrast, individual differences in verbal ability tend to play a slightly more dominant role at more advanced levels of learning.

In the second chapter of his book, Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning (1981), Stephen Krashen reviews the literature dealing with motivation and language learning aptitude. He refers to Dulay and Burt, who posit the presence of a social-affective filter in language learners. Performers with a high, strong filter will acquire less of the language directed at them in French-second-language contexts. Attitudinal factors favorable to second language acquisition will therefore be those which contribute to a low affective filter.

To resume, three hypotheses have been developed over the last twenty years in the field regarding attitude, aptitude and motivation. Hypothesis one, advanced by Gardner (1960), Carroll (1963) and Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972), states that attitude and aptitude will be statistically independent. Hypothesis two, put forth by Gardner, Smythe, Clément and Gliksman (1976), states that the aptitude factor will show a strong relationship to second language proficiency in monitored test situations and when conscious learning is stressed in the classroom. Hypothesis three, articulated by Krashen, (1981), states that the relationship between attitude and proficiency will be strongest first, when students have had sufficient intake for acquisition and second, when monitor-free measures of proficiency are used. By "monitor-free measures" are meant those which stress communicative fluency as opposed to grammatical correctness only.

In a study entitled "French Immersion Programs and Students Social Behaviours," Cziko, Lambert and Gutter (1979), compared groups of grade 5/6 students, of English-Canadian and French-

Canadian origins in respect to their social behaviors. The study showed that students perceived themselves as belonging to either one group or the other; that the groups were quite distinct from one another; that some students thought that by becoming bilingual the gap between groups would decrease and finally that extensive experience with the other group's language does effectively narrow the gap between them.

Comparison of Linguistic Competencies of FSL and Immersion Groups and the Optimum Age Question

Many of the comparative studies dealing with these questions have been undertaken by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education in collaboration with particular school boards such as the Ottawa Separate and the Carleton Boards. Studies dealing with competency levels often treat the optimum age question, or when to begin immersion instruction, together. Two reports of this type of study are Merrill Swain's "English-Speaking Child + Early French Immersion = Bilingual Child?" (1976) as well as Swain in "French Immersion: Early, Late or Partial" (1978). These reports show that the French Immersion children consistently out-performed their French-Second-Language counterparts. It seems clear from the research that more exposure time to the second language creates much higher competency levels in the four skill areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing in French. The research does not, however, resolve, in a definitive manner, the question of what age

is the best to start immersion instruction. This question is still widely debated among researchers and educators.

Implications of Immersion Research in the Field

One of the most significant publications to appear recently on immersion teaching is, Bilingual Educaion in Ontario: A Decade of Research (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1981). This document is a synthesis of the research conducted on French language programs by the Bilingual Education Project since 1970 and findings reported reflect the general trends described in studies cited above. Immersion programs are shown to produce superior results in terms of students' cognitive, attitudinal and linguistic development with no detrimental effects to their progress in English.

The O.I.S.E. report does, however, point to several important characteristics of immersion research and teaching which reflect a more tentative response to the outcomes of bilingual education in its present context. For example, the researchers state that the predominantly statistically based research design, while practical and efficient as a technique for comparing different groups of learners, may not be accurate enough to draw out all the information necessary from an educational setting in order to fully understand it. Statistical findings need to be carefully interpreted with respect to the human context in which they were gathered before they can be said to be truly significant, as suggested below: (Swain,

Lapkin, et al, 1981, p. 50 - 51):

> Statistical significance, it must be noted, cannot be equated with educational significance. The educational significance of a statistically significant difference is a matter of interpretation by parents, educators and researchers.

Secondly, the study suggests that the school climate in which immersion programs occur may have a bearing upon the achievement results of these students. A study conducted by Lapkin, Andrew, Harley, Swain and Kamin, (1981), compares the achievement of immersion students studying in specialized centres to those studying in "dual-track" schools where at least one other program is run concurrently with the immersion program. Using a largely statistically-based methodology the authors claim evidence for a higher achievement in the listening and reading comprehension of French immersion students studying in specialized centres compared to their counterparts in "dual-track" schools. Reasons given to support this finding include greater use of "receptive French" in school life, more experienced teaching personnel, a greater accumulation of resource materials in the second language across subject areas, and greater teacher satisfacton with the learning environment. The authors suggest that the implications of their study are to focus more closely on teachers' needs with respect to materials and resources and to encourage the maximum amount of French by students in whatever environment immersion programs are located.

Thirdly, the O.I.S.E. researchers voice the concern that immersion schools in themselves cannot provide a rich enough environment to push student linguistic competencies beyond certain threshold levels typical of English-speakers of French. This is because there is often a lack of sustained contact with members of the second-language group in locations where immersion programs are operating (Swain, Lapkin, et al, 1981, p. 199). "This lack of contact may effect not only the failure to generate more positive attitudes, but also the failure to make significant progress beyond a certain plateau in speaking French." In order to create as rich an environment as possible for language acquisition within the school, the O.I.S.E. report suggests that subjects considered for instruction in French should be selected on the basis of the best "productive" use of the second language by students (Swain, Lapkin, et al, 1981, p. 87). "A subject which allows considerable opportunity for students to hear and use the second language in rich and creative ways seems most appropriate."

Some of the concerns raised by the O.I.S.E. report reflect those expressed earlier by H. H. Stern (1978), in an article summarizing the achievements and directions of immersion programs to date. He underlines the importance of meeting teachers' needs through consistent, coordinate program development and suggests that the future of immersion education depends on initiatives taken in this area: (Stern, 1978, p. 853). "Once we adopt the immersion solution, it is important to make sure that it is well done; because if it is not, it is not only French that suffers but the entire education of the child."

Summary: Intent of the Present Research

This brief review of the literature provides a survey of some of the characteristics of language learners and the effects of immersion programs on their general development as individuals. It does not, however, provide much specific information about the educational environment in which these programs take place. Nor does it provide information about students' experiences of acquiring a second language in these settings. This study of a grade seven French bilingual classroom is an attempt to learn more about both the bilingual schooling context and the students' experience of it.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purposes of this research study were to come to an understanding of the social context of the French bilingual program at the grade seven level and to describe students' perceptions of their second language acquisition process in this environment.

By social context is meant those factors both inside the school, and in the community or neighborhood at large which affect the structure of classroom experiences for students and teachers participating in the program. Such factors may include characteristics of the school population, timetabling, socio-economic status of students, available resources in French, to name but a few. In order to achieve these aims, information about the program's operation and its overall impact on students, parents and teachers was needed before a more detailed, in-depth study could begin. Following this preliminary investigation, a narrower focus was adopted, concentrating on a specific set of classroom activities and individuals in order to obtain more detailed responses from the participants with reference to the social context defined above. This chapter describes firstly the generalized interviewing

procedures of the pilot project and secondly the in-class observation and interviewing techniques used in the research study itself.

The Pilot Project

In preparation for a descriptive analytic study of the French bilingual program at the Junior High level a pilot project was undertaken in May-June 1982 in three schools of the Edmonton Public Board. The purpose of the pilot project was to elicit indicators of students' attitudes toward their experience in the bilingual program at the grade seven level in order to come to a deeper understanding of the value of the bilingual schooling process for them. Since students' attitudes may be indirectly influenced by parental encouragement and opinions expressed at home, as well as by classroom experiences directed by teachers at school, the research sought to compare the view of the three groups in the pilot project. Three separate series of interview questions were developed around appropriate themes and these schedules are included in Appendix I. The focus of each series of questions varied slightly, according to the interests, age and responsibilities of the particular group. For example, student questions were largely activity-oriented and geared to the affective domain, since it was felt that feelings about teachers, peers and class activities would be the strongest predictors of positive or negative attitude formation. Research conducted by Gardner, Smythe, Clément and Gliksman (1976) indicates that these factors affect the construct of

motivational characteristics in second language learners.

Parent questions were generally evaluative in nature, focusing on the home-school communication link, perceptions of the program's success, teacher success and their own child's achievement within the program. An important parent question related to their level of commitment to the general goals of bilingual education, since it was felt that responses to this question would indicate much about the home environment of bilingual students. Teacher questions were focused both on implementational issues and evaluation processes, the latter referring to student performance, the success of the program as a whole in achieving the basic goals of bilingual education, and the teacher's role as an individual in setting and achieving pre-stated goals. A draft proposal of the interview questions for the three groups was presented to a research seminar of graduate students in the field of Second Languages. Subsequent to their critical review, a modified version was submitted to the researcher's advisor for final approval before beginning the project.

The researcher selected two Junior High schools where the bilingual program was being taught to students now in grade seven who had begun their French instruction as immersion pupils in kindergarten, and a third school where the grade seven students were experiencing French immersion for the first time. The late immersion group was selected as a comparison to determine whether a lengthier exposure to the immersion experience produced any significant differences in attitude as compared with an initial exposure at a later stage of development. After the researcher had identified

three schools, appointments were set up with the Principals to discuss the nature of the project and the possibilities of participation for their schools. Simultaneously, an application to conduct research was submitted to the Director of Instructional Resources, Research and Liaison for the Edmonton Public School Board. The Board officials then consulted the principals who agreed to participate, pending the approval of their immersion/bilingual staff members. The researcher subsequently arranged to meet with potential teacher participants and a copy of the proposed interview schedules was presented to them at that time. Once the staff members at the three schools consented to participate, the application was approved and access to the schools and grade seven bilingual classes was granted. Parental participation was solicited on a voluntary basis by letter distributed to all grade seven bilingual students in each of the schools represented. Four sets of parents responded to the researcher's request, agreeing to be interviewed in their homes at times convenient for them. A total of eighteen students and nine teachers were interviewed during the school day, generally at noon hour or during spare periods.

Interviews with subjects were recorded on tape, then compared and analysed in the following manner. The researcher reviewed all tapes and their content was organized according to the following general categories listed below in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Organizing Categories, Pilot Project, June 1982

1. Program Concerns re Content and Resources.
2. Expectations re L2 Proficiency.
3. Role of the Teacher in Bilingual Education.
4. Role of the Parents in Bilingual Education.
5. Patterns of Communication in French in School.
6. Relationship Between Cultural Activities and Language Acquisition.
7. School Climate and the Bilingual Program.
8. Personal Experience of the Program (Students/Teachers/Parents).
9. Future Goals as Related to the Bilingual Program.

During the synthesizing process it was observed that certain categories overlapped, providing the same information to the researcher. This indicated that the interview protocol materials required more focusing and specificity. In addition, since the parent data provided only very broad and generalized information, it was decided to drop this group in the actual research study, concentrating on the experiences of students and teachers in a particular classroom setting. Final results of the pilot study were communicated to bilingual program administrators at the Edmonton Public School Board in December, 1982. As well as summarizing the content of tapes all parent tapes (which were spoken in English) were fully transcribed together with sections of the teacher tapes, spoken in French. No student tapes from the pilot project were transcribed since it was felt that verbatim reports would add no

greater depth to students' remarks at this time. Rather, it seemed clear that better and more detailed student data could be obtained in longer, more directed interviews undertaken in a situation whose characteristics were familiar to both participants and researcher.

Summary of the Pilot Project Findings

The findings of the pilot project resulted in a modification of both the research questions and the methodology used in the final study, undertaken in the fall of 1982. In order to come to an understanding of students' perceptions of their bilingual education experience it was felt that it would be necessary to observe the ongoing activities in a pre-selected grade seven classroom and to describe the structure of these activities as completely and carefully as possible. Secondly, it would be important to formulate questions about students' reactions to their experiences and compare these with the intent expressed by their teachers in another set of protocol questions. Therefore, although the focus of the research remained fixed on the students, two research activities were incorporated into the study. These were firstly, to observe and describe a specific set of bilingual classroom activities at the grade seven level, and, secondly, to uncover through questioning students' attitudes toward these events. By comparing students' understandings of teacher intent, it was determined that some of the basic themes underlying bilingual classroom life could be described and interpreted using data from two converging, but not necessarily

conflicting points of view, those of the students and those of the teachers. Accordingly, a second application to do research was submitted to the Edmonton Public School Board seeking permission to enter, observe and question student and teacher participants within a single classroom setting at the grade seven level.

Selection of the Research Study Site

The school selected for the research study was one of the three included in the pilot project. The Principal and Junior High bilingual staff members were enthusiastic about the possibility of an interview-based technique being implemented at a later point in the study and it was on this basis that they were contacted initially at the end of June, 1982 and again in September, to invite them to participate in a lengthier, more detailed study. Some staffing changes had occurred in the Junior High over the summer and it became necessary to re-introduce teacher participants to the basic goals of the study as well as to present the revised protocol interview materials. Permission to enter the designated school was granted to the researcher after the teachers contacted indicated a willingness to participate.

Objectives of the Research Study

The objectives of the research study were: first, to describe some typical activities of a grade seven bilingual French classroom

and the general patterns of communication exchange which flowed from these activities; second, to describe students' reactions to these activities in the context of their on-going second-language acquisition process; third, to determine teacher intent in presenting these classroom activities; and fourth, to compare teacher intent to students' interpretations of their experience. In matching students' interpretation to teacher intent, it was felt that some significant questions about the bilingual schooling process could be raised which would have implications for immersion teaching and program development in a majority language context at the Junior High level.

Research Study Procedures

To achieve the stated objectives of the research study, the researcher prepared to undertake a period of nonparticipant observation in the classroom during which time detailed notes would be taken describing specific events, teaching procedures and amounts of teacher talk and student talk. This material would provide a frame of reference for the researcher which could then be used to contextualize remarks made by students in the interview process which was to follow. Teacher intent was determined through interview sessions as well, involving discussions about curriculum and teaching practice. A comparative analysis of interview data by means of an organizing framework of common categories was undertaken to describe similarities and differences between student and teacher

responses. Finally, by matching the observational record data to the interview data, some significant questions were raised about the bilingual program as it is articulated at the grade seven level. These questions may have important implications for both pedagogy and program structure and content.

Development of the Protocol Materials

Since the revised focus of the study was placed on a description of classroom activities and an analysis of students' and teachers' attitudes towards these experiences, a new set of questions was developed to reflect this shift in priorities and an interview framework set up. Four major categories were identified for each of the groups. Categories for students and teachers paralleled one another closely except that recognition was given to the fact that teachers as program planners were concerned with the curricular content of the program as well as the language acquisition process of their students, while students, as consumers of a particular set of program plans, were concerned with activities and process. Data were to be organized according to four main categories. A comparative list of student and teacher interview categories is provided in Figure 2, below.

Figure 2

Comparative List of Student/Teacher Interview Categories

	Students		Teachers
I	Curricular Difficulties based on L2 Acquisition	I	Curricular Difficulties based on Program Content and Resources
II	Influence of Curriculum on L2 Use in School	II	Curricular Difficulties based on L2 Acquisition
III	Impact of Program on Student Activities Outside School	III	Impact of Program on Teacher Activities Outside School
IV	Students' Attitudes Towards Bilingual Program	IV	Teachers' Attitudes Toward Bilingual Program

After the major categories were defined, indicators were developed from which specific questions were formulated. A one-to-one correspondence was established between indicators and specific questions. For each indicator identified a specific question was devised. For example, in student category number one a major indicator was "difficulties arising from the use of French in different subject areas." The specific question which corresponded to this indicator was the following: Is it the same or different learning subjects such as Math or Science in French as compared to subjects taught in English? If it is different, in what ways and why? In teacher category number one, a major indicator was teacher attitudes toward program materials. The specific question

corresponding to this was: Are the unit topics in a prescribed subject area (eg. Math, Science, Social Studies), of interest to you personally? The complete interview framework for students is included in Appendix IV of the study.

The Observational Period

The methodology used in the research study consisted of nonparticipant observation using a chart prepared by the researcher, followed by in-depth interviewing techniques using the protocol materials described above. These techniques were considered complementary, since the observational data were used to contextualize and understand more fully the interview data which followed. The observational period lasted approximately two weeks before the student interviewing process began. Additional observational sessions were scheduled two to three times weekly during the interviewing period until all of these were complete in the third week of November. Specific dates and times of all observational sessions are included in the Observational Record contained in Appendix II. During this time the researcher became acquainted with the students in the class, the unit topics under discussion in each of the core subject areas, and the teaching techniques employed. By engaging students in casual conversation before and after formal instruction took place, the researcher was able to gain some insights into individuals' personalities and was gradually accepted by them. In order to familiarize herself with course content, the researcher obtained copies of texts and other

instructional materials being used. Teachers indicated at the outset of the study what material they would cover and approximately how much time they would be spending on specific topics. Follow-up discussions were held with teachers two to three times weekly during this period during which they evaluated student learning and progress in relation to their goals. In order to gain a general feeling for students' attitudes about daily learning tasks, the researcher circulated freely during quiet work periods in the classroom, asking brief questions where appropriate, observing interactions between students at their seats and glancing through the notebooks of various individuals. The observational period allowed the researcher to establish herself with students as a familiar and unobstrusive classroom figure who posed no threat to them. Their initial curiosity about her presence and purposes gradually gave way to an attitude of taken-for-granted acceptance once they felt assured that she was not an authority figure and had no evaluative role to play. The researcher made careful notes about classroom events, some of which included the following: a field trip to Whitemud Creek to observe a beaver environment, an introductory lesson on microscopes, a discussion on ethnic groups, oral reporting of multicultural projects, a French dictée and a question and answer session based on the reading of a short passage in French. In addition to descriptions of events, the researcher recorded the relative amounts of teacher talk to student talk during specific lessons by means of an instrument which was devised for this specific project called the "Language Utilization Record," a

copy of which is found in Appendix III of the study. The researcher also recorded information about the questioning techniques of teachers, the kinds of questions asked and the characteristics of student responses. Questions were divided into two basic types: product-oriented, convergent types which focused directly on course content, and process-oriented, divergent types focusing on the thinking skills of students. Student responses were categorized according to their length, amount of detail, and clarity of ideas expressed.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the school environment, the researcher interviewed the Principal, other staff members, both bilingual and non-bilingual, and the school office staff concerning their impressions about how the two main streams of children were integrated into the total school community. These interviews were unstructured and took place at convenient moments during the school day, during recess, free preparation periods or in the lunch hour.

The researcher's interview with the librarian was somewhat more structured although not recorded on tape. Specific questions were asked of the librarian about the French book collection on two occasions. These discussions took place in the library in free periods between class visits. Specifically, questions were asked about ordering procedures, cataloguing, location of books and periodicals in French in the library, and strengths and weaknesses of the present collection from the point of view of the immersion program. Notes were made following these conversations and incorporated into the Observational Record. The researcher perused

the collection and matched her own impressions with views expressed by the librarian.

During the two-month period that the researcher was in the school, she was given access to student files which enabled her to collect statistical data relating to student achievement in the form of I.Q. scores, demographic data relating to the location of students' home districts, and academic data relating to the number of years of experience they had had in the bilingual program.

The Interview Process

Following the two-week observational period, an interview schedule for the students was posted in their Science/Math classroom giving dates and locations where interviews were to take place. Initially, students agreed to participate on a volunteer basis. However, once all dates were filled, the list of volunteer participants was discussed with the bilingual teachers to ensure that students enrolled were from high, average, and below average ability levels. Achievement levels were determined not only by teacher perceptions of students' in-class performance, but also by the I.Q. scores available in student files. The boys who totalled one-third of the class population were somewhat reluctant to volunteer initally. However, after the first week of interviews was complete, those students who had come forward in the beginning gave positive reports about their sessions and on this basis more boys were able to be recruited. The researcher sought the participation of more boys in order to achieve a better balance between the sexes.

It was felt that the volunteer aspect of the student interview sample ought to be maintained where possible since interviews took place from 11:45 to 12:15 during the lunch break and necessitated special arrangements with parents for students to remain at school during this period. At no time were individuals pressured into participating if they showed reluctance to do so. Out of a class of thirty-two students, twenty-one volunteers came forward and were interviewed individually, or in groups of two, three or four.

Description of the Interview Sessions

During the student interview sessions, the sequencing of the questions as designated in the protocol materials was not always uniform. The order in which questions were asked depended largely upon the way in which the flow of discussion was developing. In addition, questions asked were framed in more personalized terms, taking into account the individual's specific classroom experiences. For example, if a student had appeared disinterested or confused during a particular activity in Mathematics during the observational period, the interviewer made direct reference to the circumstances and asked the student to elaborate on his or her feelings about it. If a student was experiencing particular difficulties or frustrations relating to a learning activity, he or she likewise became specific about the context of the problem. Flexibility on the part of the researcher during the interview sessions was felt to be a vital element to the collection of meaningful data from participants.

Teacher interviews took place after all student interviews were complete, during the first week of December. One interview with the native speaker of French took place in the evening at the researcher's home, in French. The second teacher interview with the non-native speaker took place after school in the teacher's classroom and was conducted in English. Teacher interviews lasted approximately one hour and the order of major topics and specific questions following reasonably closely that indicated by the protocol materials. In addition to the recorded interview sessions, informal conversations with teacher participants took place at least three times for each individual, during the researcher's stay at the school. These conversations were held during the lunch hour break, or preparation periods at various times of the day and week. Topics discussed in the informal meetings ranged from individual student's learning or behavior problems, to implementation issues and lesson planning, as well as view of the bilingual program and its operation within the school site. Some issues which were discussed in the informal session surfaced in the recorded interview sessions.

The Verification Process

In order to verify that student and teacher comments had been correctly understood by the researcher, all interviews with both groups were transcribed following the sessions. After transcription was complete, the researcher prepared interpretive summaries of the conversations and showed both the transcript and the interpretative summary to the subjects concerned. These persons then stated whether

they were in agreement with the interpretation made. In most cases, all parties, students and teachers alike, were in agreement. Slight modifications were made to student interpretations in four cases. The teacher verification process followed a similar procedure and both participants were in full agreement with the interpretations given. The verification process, although painstaking and time consuming was considered to be essential in legitimatizing the data obtained in the research study. Two student subjects out of twenty-one were unable to verify the statements from their interview sessions owing to absences through illness in one instance, and an early departure for Christmas holidays in the other instance.

Procedure for Compiling Interview Data

In order to carry out a thorough analysis of the interview data, transcripts from subjects in the two groups were examined closely and re-read many times. All responses to the specific questions in the protocol materials for individuals in each group were located and placed side by side. When consensus appeared to have been reached in the comments about a particular issue, this was indicated. Where responses among subjects in the same group varied, the main trend was summarized first and any significant differences indicated in subsequent paragraphs of the text. Both students and teacher opinions were supported with direct quotes from the transcripts. After the descriptive analysis of data for each group was complete, findings between groups were compared. Recurring

themes were then delineated as a result of the comparative analysis and critical questions about the program and its relationship to the chief participants were raised at the conclusion of the chapter.

CHAPTER IV

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEW DATA

Part 1: Introduction

Portrait of a Grade Seven Bilingual Student

Any study which includes interview techniques as part of the methodology must take into account the characteristics of the respondents. Their characteristics will influence the types of data which they are able to provide reflecting their particular stage of development at the time of encounter. Grade seven students fall into the age group of eleven, twelve or thirteen years and as such display some of the characteristics of childhood and some of the characteristics of adolescence. The portrait outlined here draws heavily from John J. Mitchell's book, Adolescent Psychology (1979) in which he devotes an entire chapter to the period of child adolescence indicated by this age group. The early adolescent period, dominated by growth demands, marks the period of greatest maturity difference between boys and girls. The latter mature much faster than the former during this stage. Owing to this period of intensive growth, which brings the onset of puberty, young adolescents are preoccupied with their bodies, the way they look and

how they feel. They are strongly influenced by negative criticism about their appearance and experience feelings of shyness, sensitivity and inferiority with regard to the way they look. Swings of emotion and sudden intensive bursts of feeling are frequent among youth at this stage and as a result personal attachments are rarely longlasting. Egocentrism is an important distinguishing mark of the early adolescent and is rooted in his or her preoccupation with the changing body. Youthful exuberance and spontaneity are reminders of a rapidly disappearing childhood. Both the family and the peer group have immense importance for the early adolescent because both play a vital role in the growth process. The family generally offers a reasonably stable support base to which the youngster returns for comfort, reassurance and structure. The peer group is extremely influential because it establishes the rules for social acceptance and social rejection. Social competency is acquired by early adolescents in interaction with the peer group and acceptance becomes therefore a vital issue for youth of this age. Later on, individualization will acquire greater significance, but at this particular period in their lives, the attainment of group membership has paramount importance for them. Frequently conflicts experienced at home relate to the measures young adolescents will take to assure group membership, against the conduct, beliefs and ideas approved by parents.

How then do these characteristics shape the classroom behavior of early adolescents? On the one hand, grade seven students are easy to teach because they are impressed and strongly influenced by

commanding teacher personalities. However, a commanding teacher-figure does not necessarily imply a repressive individual. Intimidated students may tolerate harsh treatment temporarily but the resentment which builds up is likely to back-fire on the teacher sooner or later. Cognitively speaking, students at this stage can assimilate information better than analyzing it and they are unable to debate ideas beyond the range of their own experience. On the other hand, grade seven students are hard to teach because they tend to be argumentative, believing that they know more than they do. They can ask good questions, but take much longer to understand ideas and their powers of inference and induction cannot match those of an adult. The enthusiasm and energy of the early adolescent challenge and inspire teachers, while his continuous demands for attention and guidelines exhaust them.

Reasons for Choice of Early Adolescent Student Sample

A grade seven class was chosen for the study because the Junior High level represents a relatively new context for bilingual programs and new set of learning activities for students. It was hoped that by describing the conditions and requirements of the second language acquisition process in the Junior High, suggestions for improvement of teaching and learning might emerge from an analysis of the data.

Part 2: Analysis of Student Data

Student Difficulties and the L2 Acquisition Process

The first group of student interview questions concerned difficulties related to the language acquisition process. Interview data suggest that students made no distinction between difficulties related to the acquisition of French and those related to curriculum content and concepts. This is perhaps an indication of how closely the experiences of language acquisition and schooling have become linked in the minds of these students. In response to the first question about difficulties resulting from the French language, seven out of twenty-one students mentioned the word "vocabulary" directly. The rest focused on understanding and applying grammatical rules, and in particular, conjugating verbs correctly according to their groups, as well as mixing of French and English in thought, speech and writing. It was sometimes difficult for students to recall necessary vocabulary easily in the appropriate language when called upon to do so by the teacher in class. With regard to vocabulary, two separate but interrelated problems were perceived: firstly, the lack of appropriate vocabulary with which to communicate, and secondly, the retention of new vocabulary in the students' active repertoire of words. A typical comment with regard to vocabulary is quoted below:

> Well, I guess not knowing enough vocabulary because a lot of the time you know what you want to say in English, but you think, well what's the word in French? And a lot of the time you've learnt it, but you just can't remember it.

A second difficulty identified by students was the interpretation of teacher explanations to questions raised in class. This problem is related not only to the use of more complex vocabulary on the part of the instructor, but also to individual speaker style in French. Students also said however that repetition of the message and reference to print materials reduced their difficulties in this regard, as explained in this comment, "sometimes we don't understand it because the way the teacher explains it or something, but once I look at the work in the text, I kind of well, pick it up."

Students in this grade seven bilingual class made extensive use of bilingual French/English dictionaries when confronted with new vocabulary. The use of dictionaries was somewhat problematic for them when interpreting the meanings given for words and in selecting an appropriate lexical item to suit the context, as this student explains, "Sometimes it's vocabulary ... like a lot of words you have to look up and you don't know what they mean."

In addition to a perceived lack of appropriate French vocabulary, students seemed to feel that they also lacked the English equivalents for the French words which they knew. Explaining difficulties to parents concerning Math or Science, for example, was viewed as very difficult, owing to a lack of common vocabulary with which to communicate. A typical student comment is as follows, "I find it difficult with Math because I try and explain something to my mother or when she tries to help me she can't or I can't because the names are all in French."

This search for lexical equivalents is an important issue for bilingual students and influences significantly their attitudes toward certain subjects taught in French. For example, almost all students interviewed thought that Science should be taught in English because they felt they would be disadvantaged at a later stage in their school careers as a result of their French instruction. It may be that students are reflecting the opinions of their parents on this issue, but whether student-based or parent-based, the attitude expressed is very significant in suggesting the ways in which the program is viewed by its chief participants and consumers.

They seem to be suggesting that while the program is valued as an enrichment activity with respect to the acquisition of a second language, the manner in which this occurs must not deviate significantly from the general pattern of education for the majority of English-speaking students in the schools. The feeling seems to be that any deviation could work to the disadvantage of bilingual students in future schooling which is most likely to occur in English. Many student comments in the data reflect this attitude, directly paralleling concerns expressed by some parents during the pilot project. How this demand influences classroom activities and teacher planning will be examined later, when discussing materials and resources available.

A third difficulty mentioned by students was the understanding and application of grammatical concepts. Application of grammatical concepts in written work appeared to pose more of a problem than straight recognition as the student comment below, suggests:

> I guess more complicated vocabulary and ways of understanding French grammar, like "propositions" [clauses] and adverbs and stuff like that. The "propositions" mostly I found difficult. I know what a "proposition" is, but it's hard to decipher it into French.

In fact, when students spoke about their reactions to particular subject areas the overwhelming impression which they conveyed concerning French was that it was comprised very largely of grammar. Student impressions are probably related to their teacher's choice of objectives. The Language Arts teacher indicated that his major objective for the class was to increase grammatical awareness in French for the purpose of improving students' writing skills. It is significant to note that attitudes of students toward grammar instruction and practice were generally negative. As a result French per se was viewed as boring and repetitive by many, as indicated below:

> Science and Math and Social are nice, because that's about the world and that interests me but French, French you could throw out the window for all I care ... and then you've got to try and get the nouns and verbs and articles. ... Grammar, I don't like grammar.

This relationship may be a dangerous one since it affects student motivation and confidence in second language capabilities acquired to date. In this regard, students perceived their oral language capabilities to be much better than their written abilities. Their ongoing struggles with the latter are described by a student in the comment quoted below:

> Like forming sentences and putting them together 'cause a lot of things are so backwards, or not backwards, they change - an English and a French sentence - you can't directly translate a French sentence into English.

Student attitudes toward difficulties seemed to be fairly casual and laissez-faire, in large part owing to the fact that they were familiar with these types of problems on an ongoing basis as this comment suggests, "Not really [difficult] - because we've been learning it [French] for seven years and it's kind of just the same old thing, again."

Coping with Difficulties

In coping with difficulties students tended to adopt one of two strategies. Either they asked the teacher for clarification, or they requested help from parents at home. Sometimes the two strategies were combined, but generally one of the two predominated. Some of the students interviewed expressed a degree of reticence about asking their teachers for help, particularly if the teacher in question was considered to be somewhat intimidating. In expressing difficulties to the teacher, the ability to articulate the problem may also be a factor in deciding whether or not to approach the instructor. The student comment cited below elaborated on this idea:

> Well, I'm shy so sometimes it's kind of hard for me to go up and ask a question and sometimes in other cases I don't know, I just go up and ask her as if I'm really sure what I'm going to ask her. If I know it's a positive question but if it's not really a positive question I don't really want to go up and ask it.

Even those students considered to be very self-confident in both classroom observation sessions and interviews said that they relied on parents from time to time for assistance with schoolwork. Sometimes this coping strategy backfired, however, causing more confusion in students' minds because of the lack of a "common vocabulary" referred to earlier with which to work.

Difficulties and their Relationship to Achievement

How do difficulties with the second language or the subject matter affect student achievement? In response to this question most students stated that the fact that their core subjects were taught in French made no difference in their achievement marks, since the bilingual program was the same, content-wise, as the English program. One student claimed that his marks could be higher if he were studying in English, but that he preferred the trade-off of achievement to participation in the bilingual program as indicated below:

> I think that if I wasn't in the French program I'd be able to get much higher marks in English and have that show that. No matter whether you're in the bilingual or not, that's just considered that's what your average mark is. But that really doesn't bother me now. I don't think it'll have much to do with anything in later life, but it bugs me a little bit.

In contrast to the similarities which were perceived in the French and English programs, students did indicate a difference in the pacing of instruction in their French classes. A slower pace

was seen by them as necessary to allow for explanations and thinking time in the second language. One student commented on this point by saying, "And it takes longer sometimes because it's in French. It takes a little more time to explain it." Another stated, "And you're [the student] a little slower, 'cause it's a little harder."

Difficulties and their Relationship to Communication in French

How does experiencing difficulty affect students' use of French in school? If students are unable to explain their difficulty to the teacher in French in a way which reasonably satisfies their needs, they seem less inclined to express their problem, as suggested by this comment, "If I find something hard to express, I don't express it." Reticence among students seems to be linked to personality characteristics as well. Quiet, timid students claimed to have more difficulty speaking up in class and talking to the teacher about problems than bolder, more confident students. This situation is likely to occur in English classes also, but the problem is more acute in the French bilingual program because of the limited opportunities which students have to communicate with speakers of French regarding school matters. The rules of social interaction in a bilingual classroom have been clearly established for participants since their inital entry in the lower elementary grades. The rules are that French is to be used when communicating with the teacher and peers in formal classroom situations; English is reserved for outside and during English instructional periods. As a result, it did not occur to any of the students interviewed to

address their teachers in English when experiencing difficulty. It would appear that when a satisfactory resolution to the problem could not be found in school through student-teacher dialogue, students tended to fall back on assistance from parents at home. On those rare occasions when the rules of communication within the class are violated, the teacher is the person to initiate assistance in English. Conditions under which this occurs will be discussed in the chapter dealing with the descriptive analysis of teacher data.

Summary of Student Comments on Difficulty

In summarizing student comments on difficulty and the second language acquisition process, we may conclude that a lack of vocabulary was perceived as the major stumbling block, although grammar and mixing of French and English terms were also mentioned. This lack impinged upon student communicative capabilities to a certain degree when speaking in class and when articulating conceptual difficulties encountered in particular subject areas. Sometimes a lack of vocabulary impeded student understandings of teacher explanations. However, more time and more repetition of explanations using similar structures and vocabulary appeared to ease difficulties in understanding. Student coping strategies with regard to difficulty involved discussion with the teacher at school as well as with parents at home. Students also seemed to feel that vocabulary difficulties in particular subject areas such as Science could not easily be overcome and that consequently instruction under these conditions ought to take place in English. Students seemed

willing to accept new vocabulary in French provided that they also had a firm grasp on the equivalent items in English. This was seen as important for future schooling and career goals. Students' comments on difficulty seem to suggest a somewhat different orientation to the problem than the one expressed in earlier grades and hence may require a different teaching approach from educators at the Junior High level. For example, a more comparative-contrastive approach to vocabulary-building, particularly as it relates to more complex terminology may be desirable at this level.

Influence of Curriculum on Communication in French

In this category questions such as the following were asked: Was it easier for students to express ideas about course content in Math as opposed to Social Studies? Were students able to communicate content-related ideas effectively in French, or did they experience some limitations? If so, what was the nature of these limitations? In addition to classroom communication, this section of the interview asked questions about the use of French for thinking and study in the preparation of homework assignments. Thirdly, questions were asked to determine the extent to which French was used in research projects.

In describing students' perceptions of their communicative capabilities in the classroom, it is necessary to make distinctions between oral speech and writing, as well as generalized content and subject-specific content. As a result of long experience in their bilingual program, the students claim to have built up a considerable

degree of ease in expressing themselves in French. They see their skills as far surpassing those of students in the grade seven FSL program. A typical student comment with reference to generalized capabilities is quoted below:

> ... like maybe if I were just starting French this year like some of the English grade seven's you wouldn't feel as comfortable because you'd be sort of clumsy when you're speaking, but this way we're quite fluent so we can say ... most of the time you can just say what you want.

However, when student talk is focused on more abstract ideas and when the use of more subject-specific vocabulary is required, some hesitation is expressed by subjects concerning the fluency of their speech in these contexts as the two comments given below suggest:

(1) ... but in French and Social where it's not factual .. I guess Social is more about communicating, just talking and stuff and so you're just trying to express yourself, but you can't remember stuff.

(2) In Social, 'cause you don't know as many words and you're discussing 'Ethnic Groups.' It's very new to us.

A factor cited by students as affecting fluent expression of content ideas was error correction procedures used by their teachers. Some subjects interviewed found error correction hard to cope with because it scrambled the message they wished to communicate as illustrated below:

> ... The one thing I don't like is when in the middle of a sentence the teacher interrupts you ... corrects you. You say it over again, you say another thing wrong, so you end up talking about something entirely different than what you originally wanted to ask ...

Nevertheless, not all students are blocked or frustrated in the expression of their ideas to the same degree. Some have developed a strategy for getting their message across. The more academically successful, self-confident and persistent students are able to make use of the paraphasing technique when they encounter gaps in their vocabulary while communicating in French. A typical student comment in this regard is as follows:

> Even if you don't know it, you don't have to say it in English. You can always explain what you mean. You can always get around - if there's something you don't know how to say, you can always get around it another way ...

While error correction techniques are viewed negatively by some students as a barrier to the expression of the complete idea in mind, others reflect an opposite point of view where the teacher is seen as a valuable resource person whose function is to input authentic French words, thus eliminating incorrect usage in student speech. This point of view is expressed by the student quoted below:

> Yes, the teacher does stop and correct you and I think it's because [the teacher] wants you to learn the proper French way ... not going on saying something that's not the proper language for it. 'Cause some of us when we're saying the French sentence or paragraph ... we use our own words or an English word and the teacher will stop and correct you so you know what the word is the next time you use it in a sentence so you can use that one instead of the one you have.

When students are caught off guard by a teacher question, they may experience nervousness, causing them to falter and hestitate when attempting an answer. The act of forming a reply is sometimes complicated by the switching process from thinking in English to thinking in French which is initiated after a respondent has been selected. A typical comment relating to the switching process is as follows: "Yeah, well if I was thinking of an answer in English, I still have trouble translating it into French." Comments about thinking and reacting in the classroom seem to show that more student thought goes on in English than we may suspect and that automatic responses to significant stimuli occur most frequently in English, before being transferred to French. One student commented in the following manner about emotional reactions to classroom experiences:

> ... Cause even when we're doin' the microscopes and we see something really neat we said, "Oh wow! that's neat come and look at this!", instead of 'Oh! ça c'est excellent, viens voir!'

A concluding statement regarding communicative skills in French as influenced by curriculum would indicate that students encounter greater difficulties in those subjects requiring sustained participation and formulation of ideas through discussion techniques. Those subjects restricting the different kinds of student responses through directed question and answer techniques seem to pose less of a communication problem for them.

French and Homework Activities

How is French used in the preparation of individual homework assignments? Varying points of view were expressed concerning this issue. Some students claimed they were not aware of what language they were using, the prime concern being completion. Several said that the language used in homework activities depended upon the subject, the nature of the assignment and the language in which instructional materials were originally presented. If the materials given proved to be a rich enough vocabulary source, thinking could be carried on in French, as mentioned below:

> I think a lot of the time I do [think in French] because all of your information is in French ... and whatever is in the book is in French and then the questions are in French so you start thinking in French 'cause everything is in French.

Occasionally certain unit topics, or parts of units, or even parts of individual lessons are presented in English owing to a lack of resources for the bilingual program at the Junior High level. This is a serious problem for teachers and students which will be discussed in greater detail in the description analysis of the teacher interview data. For example, during the observational period in the classroom the researcher observed that students terminated their unit on the beaver in English. Instructional materials for the unit were written in English, the teacher spoke in French during the class, translating questions as she went, and students were

instructed to respond to these in written form in French.

The use of French as a thinking tool seemed also to be related to the student's comprehension of the materials. Here, personal preferences and academic success were also important motivators affecting language choice for individuals. As one student put it, "Well, in some subjects I don't understand the teacher but in Math I understand what [the teacher] is saying and I know what to do right off the bat."

A third factor in promoting student thinking in the second language seems to be a positive classroom climate. When students are happy, interested and involved their remarks would indicate that it is easier for them to think and communicate in French as illustrated in the following comment, "... Sometimes when I'm in a good mood, or when I'm thinking French, I do the equation in French. Otherwise I may do parts that are difficult in English." Many of the comments students made about thinking in French centred on Mathematics problem solving and number manipulations. Some of them said they thought of numbers and operations with numbers as in English, while others said they thought of them as in French. Thinking in French seemed to become more difficult in oral speech as the numbers increased in size. This could be observed when students were reporting oral answers and is supported by this comment, "I can think in French, but when I say it out loud, ... like for bigger numbers like thirty-two, I would say thirty-two, not trente-deux ..." Even though student opinions were mixed when talking about thinking skills and Mathematics, a consensus was reached in terms of the use

of English as a back-up resource whenever major conceptual difficulties occurred. A typical student comment in this vein is quoted below:

> Well ... sometimes I'll read it in French and then if I don't understand it I'll try to figure out what the words mean in English and then I'll do it in English, but usually I do it in French.

To conclude this part of the discussion regarding students' views on thinking in French, we may state that both languages become intertwined in this activity, just as vocabulary and structures become intertwined in student speech when expressing ideas out loud. The students themselves are aware of the combining process and comment on it in the following way, ... "Well, you sorta think in French and English and mix'em together."

French and Research Activities

The third major question in this category asked to what extent students made use of French when preparing research projects. Subjects were unanimous in stating that the great majority of their research was conducted in English. The reason given for this was the scarcity of suitable French resources appropriate to the students' level of maturity and mastery of the second language as suggested by the following, "There aren't that many French books and if there are French books it's just stupid little stories." When questioned about their information searches, students were agreed

that a similar lack was to be found in the public libraries, as well as in the school library. The typical research strategy employed by most students questioned was to gather information in English, write up rough notes based on readings done, and then translate these into French as indicated by this remark, "Well, most of the books were in English so ... I just did it in English then after when we were putting it together we translated as we went."

Student Attitudes Regarding Translation

Attitudes toward the translation task varied along a continuum from easy to hard. Students who viewed the process as easy considered it so because they were used to it from previous years. Those who viewed it as being complex and difficult were concerned about accurate terminology and French sentence structure. Samples of student opinions about translation are given below:

(1) Well, it's not really that hard but some words I either don't understand or I can't translate it into the right words so I dunno, in a way it's not hard and in a way it is.

(2) Just about all the books on everything are in English. Yeah, so ... it's pretty hard to translate ... The whole sentence structure is really hard.

One student viewed the translation task as a valuable exercise for comparing and contrasting English and French vocabulary, as well as for discovering, through dictionary searches the precise French

vocabulary item for words known in English. The student is quoted below:

> Sometimes I think that it's good for you [translation] because you learn more vocabulary. Because if you have it all in English and sometimes you won't know in French but you have to learn it for your project so it's sometimes a good idea to do that.

We cannot establish on the basis of a few remarks whether student understanding was facilitated, and if so, to what extent by the fact that most resources were in English. One student talked about writing "fast," "quick" notes in English which were easier to understand than if they had been written in French. Afterwards, he took his time about translating these into French in order to avoid mistakes in writing. It is clear, however, that the lack of adequate library resources for research affects significantly the program as a whole, as well as the individual students' progress in second language proficiency. Since a comparison of English and French materials reveals many gaps on the French side, it is possible that students would come to think of the French language as inferior to English in certain areas and therefore as an inadequate tool for the communication of particular ideas or subject matter. Research in the field by Gardner and Smythe (1976) shows that negative student attitudes can affect their motivation to learn a second language. One student comment regarding resources seems to point out a negative attitude towards the adequacy of these materials, as below:

> I didn't use the French encyclopedias because I felt it had a limited information source. Like if you have English encyclopedias you have a whole ... different companies and different makers and they have all sorts of information and they have things that others don't. But when it comes to these French encyclopedias there's only one set or two.

As well as creating situations where unfavorable comparisons between the quality of French materials and the quality of English materials may arise, a lack of resources in French diminishes opportunities for enrichment and extension of new vocabulary in the second language.

Translation is a complex linguistic exercise involving much thought and care in the process of transforming an original text into its completed version in the second language. During the classroom observational period students provided many examples of French project reports in Science which had been composed from English research notes using the translation technique. From examples provided the researcher concluded that grade seven students make poor translators in unguided exercises of this type owing to a lack of cognitive maturity, a lack of sustained mental concentration and an insufficient command of the semantic possibilities available to them in both languages.

The act of translating English research notes into French is likely to multiply the instances of code switching in written work which may in turn influence the quality of students' oral speech. Inaccurate translation may explain the source of several kinds of errors found in student writing, and teachers who are aware of this problem may wish to adjust their correction procedures of students'

written work accordingly. For example, it may be appropriate in the light of this situation to require several draft stages before the preparation of the final written report. Students could then move towards improved levels of French composition by stages, leaving their research notes in English behind. In addition, it may also be appropriate to encourage more and different kinds of oral reporting, debates or discussions as alternate ways of presenting research findings.

Impact of Program on Students Outside School

Three main questions formed the basis for eliciting the data in this part of the study. They were: the influence of homework on student activities outside of school; the relationship between choice of student activities and participation in the bilingual program, and finally the influence of the bilingual program on choice of friends, as well as on family life in the home.

Effect of Homework on Extra-Curricular Activities

The homework issue did not appear to be very significant for bilingual students. Some students felt that they were receiving more homework in grade seven than previously, while others felt that they were receiving about the same amount or less. Homework was considered to be a fact of school life which impinged minimally on activities outside of school provided that it was done on a regular basis and not left to accumulate until deadlines were imminent. The

only difference mentioned by the bilingual students in comparing their homework loads to those of the English students was their belief that homework took more time to do in French because the thinking process was slower, as mentioned below:

> Well, it [the bilingual program] doesn't necessarily give you more homework, but there's more time 'cause you're doing it in a second language which you have to think more ... They [the English grade seven's] have the time that they're doing it in their own language ... they have the time in class to finish it and we have to think.

Students' Extra-Curricular Activities

The second question in this category dealt with student activities outside of school. Activities of these students encompassed a wide range of pursuits which included lessons in dance, music, Chinese or Japanese language, and sports activities including ringette, soccer, fencing, hockey and badminton, to name but a few. Although none of the students were presently taking part in any French activities outside of school which bore a direct relationship to the bilingual program, several indicated that they had done so in the past. During the lower and middle grades of elementary school, these students had attended French day camps during the summer and the "Cinéclub" offered on weekends during the school year, as well as cultural events such as La Cabane à Sucre. Although students were not strongly negative about participating in French activities as such, they felt that suitable opportunities for young adolescents like themselves were very scarce. They expressed

the opinion that more was available in French for younger children in the community. However, when cultural or popular entertainments in French became available in the area and where these events aroused curiosity and interest, several students indicated that they were likely to attend. Movies were most frequently mentioned in this regard, as well as theatrical productions, although the latter to a lesser extent. Several of the students interviewed indicated that they readily made use of their French to communicate with Francophones in situations outside of school. Some of the context examples given included conversations with Francophones at a summer music camp, conversations with French exchange students in the home, purchasing items in stores when on holidays in Québec and talking to French-speaking neighbours. These communicative exchanges would not have been possible, according to the students involved, had they not been enrolled in a bilingual program. The feeling expressed seemed to be that the program had a direct impact on their activities and behaviors in these instances. Opportunities of this type, however, were not widespread among the students interviewed. Furthermore, the two students in the class who had had extensive experience with the second language in a French-speaking region of Canada tended to emphasize the lack of opportunity in Edmonton for meaningful communication with French outside of school. One of these students is quoted below:

> Well, it's a really French city, Montréal, so every time you go to the store half of the cashiers speak French and not English. So I'd usually go with my mother and I'd usually talk to them in French. But out here it's English so I can't talk to anybody in French, they wouldn't understand me.

The Bilingual Program and Peer Relationships

In the area of social relationships with peers, the bilingual program appeared to have considerable impact. Most students indicated that their choice of close friendships was restricted to individuals within the bilingual class owing to the fact that a large portion of their school day was spent with these people. In addition, since the proportion of bilingual classes is very small at each grade level in this school, students find themselves together in classes year after year. What is more significant in dual-track schools such as this one, is the tendency among students to distinguish between "bilingual" and "English" groups. Many comments made by bilingual students portray the other group in a negative light. There is a suggestion in some of these comments that bilingual students, as members of an elite group, are brighter and more mature than their English peers. Students claim that the discipline of learning two languages further enhances these qualities. One of a number of student comments which seems to provide evidence for such attitudes is quoted below:

> Well, I guess to take French you have to be quite intelligent, because you're learning two languages at once and so possibly we were brought up, ... maybe we had to mature faster because we were learning two languages instead of one.

While student attitudes may not necessarily reflect open hostility towards the other group, most students no matter where their feelings were situated along the positive-negative scale, did

maintain a certain separateness from the English group. They seemed to be expressing the opinion that extensive second language exposure instilled a different set of values which acted as a barrier between groups. Another comment in this vein follows:

> Well, I guess we're different because we learn French and we take everything in French ... Well you could say that we were brought up a different way because of French ... so we don't socialize all that well, but we're friends.

To what extent do these claims for differences affect the social climate of the school? Friction between the two groups of students can cause a certain amount of embarrassment with regard to the use of French outside of the classroom. Some bilingual students interviewed claimed that they felt constrained in the use of their French in the hallways as a result of the teasing they received from students in the English program. An example of this type of comment follows, "When you talk in French you just chat about something or other. English guys go by. 'Ah ha, there's the frogs!' So you kind of wish you would just melt into the floor." Several of the students interviewed viewed efforts on the part of the school administrators and staff to close the gap between groups rather negatively. It would appear from their remarks that they preferred to carry on business-as-usual within their group and rejected attempts to provide both structured and semi-structured integrated activities as suggested by this comment:

> If I didn't learn it [French], I'd be with the other class, and I don't want to be with the other class ... I don't think anyone wants to know anyone [from the English classes] better. I certainly don't. I'm quite happy where I am.

While the intensity of negative feelings toward the "other" group varies from individual to individual, what seems clear to the observer in situations where the two streams come together for field trips or other events, is that segregation occurs fairly quickly along program lines, creating rifts in the student body as a whole.

Despite this attitude in pupil-pupil interaction within the bilingual classroom itself, it was observed that English was used almost exclusively with peers when students were beyond the range of teacher's hearing. When asked to explain why this was so, students replied that it was easier to communicate and be understood with peers in English and that it was also more natural to interact in this way. Phrases such as "feeling uncommon", "feeling like real idiots" and "experiencing tension" when speaking to a friend in French give strong indications as to how important naturalness is for these students. While grade seven students seem prepared to make the effort of speaking in French with authority figures such as teachers, they are unwilling to extend the network further to peers and even to other teachers who may be French-speaking, but who are not designated as belonging to the bilingual group. The conclusion which may be drawn from a description of the patterns of communication prevalent in this grade seven bilingual class is that while students are hearing and comprehending a good deal of French, they may be speaking and writing considerably less. It seems likely therefore, that these patterns of communication will affect potential proficiency levels of bilingual students in French and that certain classroom practices of teachers should perhaps be modified as a consequence of this.

Impact of the Bilingual Program on the Home Environment

For most students the use of French in the home was restricted to a few scattered words or sentences in conversations with parents whose command of the language was in most cases very restricted. Some students said they were called upon to give assistance to brothers or sisters enrolled in the program at a lower grade level, or to those in FSL programs whose knowledge of French was not as extensive as that of the bilingual student. A few of the students in this particular class had a richer experience of French in use outside the classroom through travel, exposure to native speakers, or residency in a French-speaking region of Canada. Some of their comments seemed to reflect a greater sensitivity to the language particularly in relation to their own communicative capabilities, which they tended to rate lower than those who had not benefited from more intensive exposure.

In summarizing this section of the student interview data, it appears that the impact of the program on student life outside the classroom is minimal and that since this is the case, classroom events and relationships are doubly important in helping to structure student attitudes. If school experiences in French are intrepreted by students as being positive and personally meaningful, it is likely that commitment to the program will be sustained. Conversely, if these experiences are viewed in a negative light commitment and motivation to continue are likely to diminish.

Student Attitudes Toward the Bilingual Program

From the interview data obtained it is possible to distinguish those aspects of the program which students find most personally meaningful. It is also possible to tease out from some of their negative comments, those elements of the program which they may have misinterpreted or misunderstood and which consequently are in need of refinement by teachers and administrators. Finally, student comments on the value of the language acquisition process for them personally may provide some indication as to whether the bilingual program is effective in broadening their perspectives about language and people in a general way.

Satisfactions With the Program

The main satisfaction which students gained from the program was knowing a second language and being able to speak it. Almost every student interviewed put the emphasis on the speaking skill which was considered to be "fun" and "interesting." Speaking French added another dimension to students' basic knowledge and provided variety in the regular routine of the school day by switching languages from class to class, as stated below:

> It's fun to talk another language 'cause you don't have to talk English all the time ... In a way, maybe it would get dull a bit. If you know a second language you can talk that.

Students also said that learning a second language offered them access to more knowledge and different kinds of knowledge. When asked for clarification about "different kinds of knowledge" they referred to cultural awareness, the origins of particular words, and customs of French speaking people. Students seemed to be saying that they would not normally be exposed to this type of learning if they did not possess a second language. Lastly, students expressed a feeling of self-satisfaction about being able to master a skill that the English grade seven's could not. Again the notion of being separate from the others because of a language skill surfaces in this type of comment, "You can do two languages but the other grade seven's only learn one, so you're learning twice as much and I think it's fun to learn." The second language skills which the bilingual students have achieved to date in their schooling seem to be a source of pride for them and as such tend to enhance student opinions concerning their capabilities as individuals. This is indicated by comments referring to their intelligence and maturity.

Dissatisfactions With the Program

Dissatisfactions with the program may be sub-divided into curriculum aspects and situational or environmental aspects. Student frustrations stemming from curriculum issues will be described first, followed by those relating to situational aspects of the program. Most students interviewed seemed disappointed with French classes because they were viewed as boring and repetitive. Mastering verb conjugations was seen as an onerous task, re-occurring

year after year and one which took up significant blocks of class time. In a program where the emphasis is placed on achieving a high level of communicative skills in the second language, it is important to take note of the negative attitudes of students with respect to the structure of the language, as these could influence their desire to participate actively at a later date. A typically negative comment about the emphasis on grammatical structures in French class is the following:

> And you get tired of learning the same thing over and over again every year ... 'Cause that's what we've been doing. We've just been learning verbs over and over again and stuff like that and so it gets tiring.

The danger in placing too much emphasis on code as opposed to application of the code in communicative activities may be to create a sense of discouragement among students. On the other hand, it is also important to point out incorrect usage, so that students do not create false illusions in themselves about their level of mastery of the language. Undoubtedly, teachers' intentions are not focused at all times and in all ways on code or grammatical structures, but a lack of variety in classroom activities may be interpreted in this way by the students. Interview subjects were enthusiastic about literature study as an interesting method for learning more about the French language in itself and recommended more actitives of this nature in Language Arts classes. During a portion of the classroom observation period students were doing a novel study of Alexandre Dumas' work, La Tulipe Noire. One student comments about the value of this activity as follows:

> Well, I think that things like La Tulipe Noire is a good way of learning French ... Give us interesting books that we like in French ... things with plots that keep up reading the book ... like not boring things.

Most students interviewed thought that "complicated subjects" like Science should not be taught in French because they could not see a direct application for their learning in higher grades. They had trouble contextualizing scientific vocabulary and did not see it as a building block toward increased conversational capabilities. Students did not appear to see the possibilities for transfer of knowledge concepts from French to English and also believed that English vocabulary was a more "valid" choice for the teaching of Science.

> Except that I think that Science should be taught in English ... if you're going to be a doctor and go to university usually it's in English and so you have to learn it all over again because you only know the names of whatever it is in French not English.

This feeling of "lack of relevance" for Science taught in French may be interpreted in part as a commentary on teaching procedures commonly practised in this subject area. It may be that students would find the vocabulary in Science more meaningful if they were given more opportunity in class to use it in discussions, or if the teacher were able to relate class activities more closely to aspects of everyday life, or finally, if an integrated approach linking Science to Health or other subject matters was able to be carried out from time to time. The theme of relevancy of the program for

students' lives is one which surfaces in the classroom and which is particularly important in areas where bilingual programs are in operation distant from a Francophone speech community. Those students who find course material most repetitive, uninteresting and unchallenging are often the ones who voice their complaints the loudest, as illustrated below:

> I like speaking the language, but I don't like doing everything in the language. I'd consider it useful if I'd someday take a trip to Québec or to France or to anywhere in Europe, actually, but ah not really right here in Edmonton ...

Student Comments Regarding School Climate

In contrast to frustration expressed about too much French, or the lack of relevancy of the French which is taught in school, students raised concerns about the situational aspects of the bilingual program within a dual-track Junior High School. They mentioned the lack of French library materials for researching, the minority position of the program within the Junior High school studied, as well as the lack of opportunities for extended use of French in conversation. The school environment was considered by several students to be quite unconducive to fostering the French language acquisition process. This environment did not provide enough encouragement for students to express themselves freely in the second language in places other than the classroom. One student commented about the situational aspects of the program in the following manner, "I think I would change the school ... I mean I

think we should have more French books in the library and we should have more French classes." Earlier in our discussion of the student interview data the issue of language limitations was raised in reference to discussion activities in class. Some students expressed the point of view that the subject-oriented vocabulary to which they were exposed in their classes was neither enough, nor the right kind of vocabulary to permit them to expand their fluency in conversational situations. A negatively stated comment reflecting this point of view runs as follows, "Well, some of the terms were just stupid. What do we care what the 'royaume' and 'phylum' are, and the classing order and the 'famille'." [With reference to biological classification of living things.] Hence they suggested the inclusion of other kinds of subject matter such as Health or Fine Arts in French to provide them with a greater scope when speaking, "Maybe I'd have them make you take one option and Health or something like that in French ... You'd be learning more vocabulary so that you could converse better in French."

In summarizing student comments regarding school climate and the bilingual program, there appears to emerge a feeling that merely providing core subjects in French is not enough to sustain a viable and interesting bilingual program at this level. In addition to instructional periods in French, special activities, a wider variety of teaching approaches and more resources need to be developed within the bilingual school in order to create an atmosphere conducive to the acquisition of French which begins <u>in</u> the classroom, but which extends <u>from</u> it to all parts of the school environment.

Value of the Program from Individuals' Perspectives

Student interviews were concluded with a question about the value of the program for individuals. This question generated similar replies to the one on satisfactions with the program. In answering the question, most students indicated first that their parents desired them to learn a second language and to take advantage of the opportunity of learning it while they were young. Initial responses echoed more "instrumentalist-type" values and concerns including travel and career opportunities envisioned at a later stage in life. However, after some thought and reflection, a second-round of answers brought forward more abstract and integrally-motivated statements. Some, but not all students saw the value of a second language as providing them with access to a wider world through literature and film, as well as offering them the possibility of integration into another society without having to feel "foreign and left out." The majority of students interviewed were intending to complete their bilingual studies, at least to the end of grade nine and many said that they would want the same kind of educational opportunities for their children as well. The overall impression of the bilingual program upon these students seems to be positive. However, their comments and criticisms about their acquisition process and the school environment in which this takes place have significance for bilingual educators and program planners. They need to be taken into serious consideration if the impact of the program on these children's lives is to continue to

remain positive and fruitful. A review of teaching approaches, techniques and their implications, together with program content and resources would seem to be in order.

Part 3: Analysis of Teacher Data

Introductory Remarks

Two teachers participated in the research study and their comments form the basis of the interview data which follow. Teacher A is a native speaker from out-of-province in the second year of teaching the bilingual program. Teacher B is an Anglophone from Alberta in the first year of teaching whose capabilities in French parallel closely those of a native speaker. Teacher A is responsible for Mathematics and Science; Teacher B is responsible for French Language Arts and Social Studies. In the discussion of the interview data below teachers will be distinguished by the appropriate letters A or B, or by the subject areas for which they are responsible.

Curricular Difficulties Based on Program Content and Materials

In response to this question both teachers said that materials, although written at a level appropriate for grade seven students, were badly organized and too scarce to offer a variety of resources within the classroom. The French Language Arts teacher felt that adequate materials were available for literature studies, but that

the program lacked a solid structural base in terms of grammar. In Social Studies, Teacher B felt that materials translated from the Kanata kit "Cultures in Canada" in particular were too limited, too repetitive and poorly presented visually. Both teachers cited errors in translation from English to French in student handbooks in Social Studies, Mathematics and Science. Teacher A felt strongly that the presence of lexical errors in texts posed significant difficulties in the accurate teaching of specific concepts as well as student applications of content material transmitted. Incorrect terminology once learned by students was very hard to eliminate from their vocabulary. Some examples which this teacher provided with regard to errors in texts are given below:

> Il y a tellement d'erreurs de traduction ... 'Les angles alternatifs,' je n'ai jamais vu ça ... le mot c'est 'alterne.' 'L'altitude' d'un triangle; ça n'existe pas; c'est 'la hauteur' d'un triangle. Ils ont traduit d'accord. Les traductions sont très mal faites. Ils commencent à les réviser, mais en attendant l'enfant apprend tout de travers... En septième je leur montre avec les vrais termes, hauteur, 'longueur', 'largeur', mais ceux qui sont en neuvième, je ne peux pas recommencer parce qu'ils deviennent tout mêlés.

Serious instructional problems occur in the teaching of core subjects in French at this level in the area of back-up resources. Very few possibilities exist, forcing teachers to restrict their teaching to the text or to choose supplementary resources in English. The two teacher participants in the research study tended to rely mostly on the school library resources as well as input from colleagues at the same grade level in other bilingual schools.

Searching for adequate auxiliary resources which did not require translation into French was seen as an onerous task which could not be adequately attended to, owing to time limitations placed on teachers in the school setting.

Teacher Interest in Program Materials

Science and Social Studies were the subjects which elicited teacher comments about their personal level of interest with respect to program materials. The Science teacher did not refer directly to her level of interest regarding course text and materials except to reiterate on several occasions that it was a basic, introductory text to the discipline as a whole. She did however criticize its organization and presentation of material quite strongly.

The Social Studies Teacher expressed a clearly defined opinion about his level of interest in program materials. His remarks were largely negative and reflect a particular philosophical stance toward his subject.

Teacher B was speaking from the standpoint of a specialist in Geography who was disenchanted with the lack of knowledge based skills presented in the course. This teacher felt that students required a greater understanding of the physical characteristics of the world around them, before engaging in comparison of cultural groups and making inferences about Multiculturalism as a policy in Canada. Multiculturalism is one of the prescribed topics in the Grade Seven Social Studies curriculum.

> I am dead set against what we are doing in Social Studies because Social Studies is values oriented and I don't think it should be, especially for seven, eight and nine. ... I don't think kids in grade seven are in a position even after studying Indians, Eskimos or whatever to decide to what extent culture should change and adapt to a Canadian way of life ... What they're teaching now in schools is not History, is not Geography, it is Sociology and as such these kids don't know where places are, they don't know what the earth is like; ... They've missed the boat.

The process oriented approach to Social Studies[1] involves much emphasis on valuing through discussion techniques, which is somewhat problematic for the bilingual teacher. Students in grade seven still experience significant difficulties expressing more abstract ideas in the second language owing to a lack of background and suitable vocabulary. Both these insufficiencies are related to the social context in which the program itself operates, as well as teaching approaches in the classroom. While it is true that bilingual schools have been acquiring more and better library materials in French over the years, it is a fact that the vast majority of resources available are in the English language, necessarily limiting students' exposure to media other than classroom

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[1]"Process oriented approach" refers to the process of Social inquiry which forms the cornerstone for the Alberta Social Studies curriculum based on the exploration and analysis of social issues. The components of the inquiry approach are illustrated in diagramatic form, representing an interlocking wheel of skills on page seven of the Alberta Social Studies Curriculum Guide, 1981. These skills in order of presentation are: 1. To identify and focus on the issue, 2. To establish research questions and procedures, 3. To gather and organize data, 4. To analyse and evaluate data, 5. To synthesize data, 6. To resolve the issue, 7. To apply the decision, 8. To evaluate the decision and the process.

manuals. Hence, background in the subject in French and vocabulary are restricted. Teachers are also critically affected by this situation which necessitates a modification in their teaching approach. It has been pointed out that bilingual teachers are concerned both with language acquisition and with specific subject content. Therefore, in order to create situations in the classroom where students with somewhat limited second language competencies can be successful, these teachers may focus more directly on skill oriented activities such as comprehension of pre-stated concepts and limited researching as opposed to more process oriented, evaluative skills. It is easier for students to describe concrete situations in French, to draw comparisons based on characteristics already given and to provide definitions for phenomena under study, than to generalize on the nature of commonly held values. It is also easier for teachers to evaluate students' level of understanding of the material in French when activities are shaped in a more direct way.

Teacher Assessment of Student Interest in Program Materials

Teacher comments about student interest in various topics within subject boundaries were restricted to Social Studies and Science. Teacher B reported that students express negative reactions to the repetition of such themes as "Native Peoples" from previous years. Teacher A stated that the unit on "Classification of Living Things" was seen as boring because it concerned the rote learning of specific terminology as opposed to activities centering on organisms

or natural phenomena. Parts of both topics were observed at the time the research study was being conducted.

Teacher Modification of Program Materials

The third question relating to curricular difficulties and program concerned teacher modifications of materials. Reaction to this type of activity was generally negative, owing to the lack of time available to prepare adequately. Both teacher A and teacher B tried to avoid translation of supplementary resources, but tended to focus on making changes to materials at hand. The Science teacher changed the order of presentation of units in the text and gave more emphasis to activities viewed as critical to understanding, thus allowing more instructional time than the text recommended. In addition, this teacher de-emphasized activities which were viewed as unimportant, allowing less instructional time for their completion than that suggested in the text. Teacher A felt that the general presentation of the Science text lacked clarity and logic and reflected a non-specialist orientation in its composition. As far as other subject matter were concerned, the teachers involved tended to focus on motivational techniques for capturing student interest. Often resources used for this purpose were most frequently available only in English, a fact which gave teachers cause to hesitate and weigh the merits of introducing English elements into their French classes for the purpose of instructional enhancement. Teacher B comments about this important problem in the following manner:

> For any bilingual teacher they have to come to the choice at some point in time whether they want their subject first or their language first. ... I'm still struggling with it and I think it's the sort of thing that every day I will have to make that choice whether I want to give them something so important that I will give it in English if that's all I have it in, or whether I'll give them something else in French because I want them to retain the French.

This dilemma seemed to be of greater important for Teacher B than Teacher A, since the former incorporated more audio-visual materials into class presentations than the latter during the observational period indicated in this study.

Need for Program Development in Junior High

The fourth and final question in category one of the interview schedule dealt with ongoing program development at the Junior High level. Both teacher participants felt strongly that this area constituted the greatest weakness of the bilingual program as presently structured and was therefore an issue requiring immediate attention. Teacher A and Teacher B said that they experienced a feeling of isolation in their respective classrooms because of the difficulties of communicating with bilingual colleagues in other schools. Although possibilities existed to consult freely with English language colleagues teaching in the same subject areas within the school, the bilingual teachers interviewed felt such consultations were less productive than bilingual teachers' meetings where the special nature of their difficulties would be clearly understood. Teacher B indicated that frequent consultations with the

English language Social Studies teacher who was a very experienced person, proved most fruitful in developing better management techniques in the classroom. Teacher A made no comment about the frequency of interactions with the English language Science teacher, but rather focused her remarks on the lack of consistency within the French language Science program among participating schools. In her view, a more co-ordinated effort could be possible if bilingual schools followed similar course outlines by theme, as stated in the following, "... Chacun travaille à sa façon ... Ça prend un programme que tout le monde va suivre; peu importe la façon dont il va le faire." Teacher B mentioned that team-work, a technique which is often employed to good advantage in a larger school, where several teachers are responsible for a subject area at various levels, is not possible in a smaller school where one teacher instructs in the subject area for all classes at all grade levels. Teacher B found this situation a particularly difficult one as an inexperienced person new to the program.

Opportunities for Program Development

One of the questions which was asked of both teachers in the study concerned the number and kinds of opportunities they had had in the present school year [1982 - 1983] to develop curriculum in collaboration with other bilingual Junior High teachers. The response to this question was none for both Teacher A and Teacher B during the fall term from September through to December. However,

Teacher A mentioned that three intensive planning days had been scheduled for early in the New Year and that other opportunities would likely become available before the end of classes in June. Teacher A had worked on special assignment during 1981 - 1982 translating English unit topics into French during holiday periods and after school. During the time the research study was being carried out she was in the process of completing another unit in Science under similar conditions and time-frame. The main thrust of curriculum development in the bilingual program according to the views expressed by the teacher participants in this study was in translation and in the revision of translations previously completed. Teacher B felt that another aspect of curriculum development requiring action was the development of evaluation procedures to assess program materials presently in use. He felt that the Board ought to take a leadership role in initiating and developing such procedures as indicated by the following, "They [the Board] have yet to really assess their programs ... but they've got to have some other branch within the French to look at what actually is going on ... where the problems are."

Individual Teacher Program Development

Teacher B also made reference to curriculum development being carried out on an individual basis by teachers in their classrooms in response to perceived gaps in resources. Often, teachers developing materials in this manner spend many hours devoting much preparation and care to their end product, but are reluctant to share

their efforts with other bilingual colleagues because of insufficient recognition. According to teacher B this is an illogical and wasteful way to develop curriculum, because benefits are not accrued by the maximum number of individuals and the task of development falls on the shoulders of one person operating under extremely trying conditions. While the two teacher participants seemed interested in participating in program development because they felt it would facilitate the tasks of future bilingual teachers, participation in such activities during the school year imposed an extra burden. Both Teacher A and Teacher B claimed that much more work needed to be done in the area of curriculum development and that a major evaluative dimension of materials in use should be annexed to the production aspect in order to guide future curriculum planning for the bilingual program.

Curricular Difficulties and L2 Acquisition

In response to questions about curricular difficulties and language acquisition, two slightly different points of view were expressed by the teacher participants. Teacher A seemed to reject any relationship between language difficulties and conceptual difficulties, while Teacher B seemed to suggest that some conceptual difficulties experienced by students were related to the second language. Both points of view bear investigation since they are based on a rich source of daily observation of students and teaching experience in the classroom. The major student difficulty in

relation to French which was identified by these teachers concerned a lack of subject specific vocabulary. Teacher A seemed to be saying that this weakness had an effect on students' understanding of explanations given in class. To overcome these difficulties, teacher A used repetition, numerous examples and models, as well as a more simplified vocabulary whenever the occasion required it, as indicated by the following:

> A certains points oui, c'est plus difficile pour eux. Par exemple, je vais peut-être reprendre une explication trois, quatre fois. Essayer de trouver de nouveaux mots pour vraiment leur faire comprendre ce que je veux dire.

Teacher A also seemed to be saying that comprehension difficulties could be overcome as the year progressed with more practice and background in the subject matter itself and that difficulties which were conceptually based would be experienced by students regardless of the language of instruction of the course, "Moi, je me dis que s'ils avaient leur programme en anglais, qu'ils auraient exactement les mêmes difficultés de compréhension." This is an interesting question and one which bears further investigation. It is possible that comprehension or content difficulties experienced by English language students and French bilingual students may vary according to the subject matter involved and the nature of specific topics within the subject itself. In referring to Science, for example, Teacher A stated that a slower pace of instruction may be required, not necessarily because of student unfamiliarity with the language and its structures, but rather because of the newness of the course content itself as indicated by this comment:

> Je dois ralentir peut-être pas nécessairement à cause de la langue ... c'est dû au fait qu'ils n'ont jamais fait de sciences de leur vie ... ils savent pas qu'est-ce que c'est ... donc ils doivent apprendre ... Je suis certaine que dans les chapitres qui vont venir que ça va aller mieux.

Teacher B outlined two areas of difficulty for students which were attributed to the French language. The first difficulty was the problem of language switching and specifically the extent to which he felt English influenced students' use of spoken and written French, a problem which was felt to be hard to overcome in the present school environment. The second difficulty was aural comprehension in French relating to the understanding of more abstract concepts and is identified in the following comment, "When it's a little more abstract, a little more difficult, they do lose something. As long as it's basically simple, I think they seem to hang on to it pretty well."

Teacher Treatment of Students' Difficulties

The coping strategies of teachers in relation to student difficulties with French seemed to vary slightly with the participants involved in the research study. Teacher B made reference to pre-teaching of requisite vocabulary items in the beginning stages of a new unit of study. Terms such as 'ethnic group' needed to be defined in order to provide adequate background for students. Where comprehension difficulties persisted with certain students, Teacher B tended to resort to English after several attempts to facilitate understanding in the second language

had been tried unsuccessfully. Teacher A did not generally resort to English in such situations, but stuck to repetition of the explanation and use of further examples. If the student concerned appeared completely incapable of understanding, then he would be referred to English reference materials in an attempt to resolve the problem.

As far as teacher expectations of students were concerned when experiencing difficulties, Teacher B, focusing on the issue of fossilized errors in students productive use of French, attempted to increase student awareness of the phenomenon through re-directed questioning techniques. This teacher believed that a demanding attitude toward the quality of language output, in both the spoken and written forms, would sensitize students to their problems with the manipulation of acceptable structures and encourage them to develop a critical standard of their own communication acts. Teacher B's objective was not to attain perfection in this regard, but rather to engender a significant improvement in individuals. Teacher A appeared less focused on corrective procedures regarding spoken French and more concerned with understanding and mastery of subject matter. Teacher A made a concerted effort to assist floundering students in class through clarification techniques based on question and answer interactions, but also provided remediation during the noon hour or after school. It was considered to be the responsibility of the student to seek assistance when a problem of understanding was encountered.

While the two teacher participants in the research study tended to reflect different points of view about the viability of the

distinction between content or concept difficulties and second language related difficulties, the general method of treating difficulties appeared to be similar: repetition of teacher explanations coupled with practical examples. The use of supplementary references or explanations in English seemed to be a technique more frequently employed by Teacher B than by Teacher A.

Teacher Opinions about Difficulties, French and Achievement

When discussing the effect of difficulty on students from various ability groupings, both teachers suggested that achievement had a significant bearing on attitude formation and motivation of students. The Teacher B felt that as a general rule the average and above-average students responded to the challenge of doing course work in French and sought resolution for any difficulties which they encountered along the way by questioning the teacher. The weak students in Teacher B's estimation were overwhelmed by the task of talking about difficulties in a second language and therefore tended to keep silent about them. Teacher A seemed to indicate that language ability bore no relation to achievement. From Teacher A's point of view, the weaker students remained weak and the stronger students remained strong regardless of the language of instruction. In support of this position, Teacher A cited tests in Science given in French and in English whose results were roughly parallel for the same students in both languages. The test material was however based on different topics studied in class. Teacher A did refer to one student whose speaking abilities were highly developed owing to

the fact that some French was used in the home, but whose academic work in school was poor. This student was considered to be immature and extremely disorganized in class, factors which would strongly inhibit academic achievement, regardless of aptitude and intellectual abilities. To conclude our summary of teacher comments regarding difficulties posed by the second language and their effect on achievement, it may be stated that the ability to articulate difficulties influences the students' desire to do so, which may in turn determine how quickly and satisfactorily such difficulties are resolved. Students who do not seek resolution for their difficulties invariably fall behind as the year progresses and the complexity of subject matter increases.

Teacher Awareness about L2 Use in School

The last question in this category relates to teacher perceptions of students' use of French in the school environment. As an opening statement it may be said that both teacher participants expressed satisfaction with the generalized speaking capabilities of students as displayed in classroom contexts, but deplored their lack of effort in attempting to communicate in French with peers both inside and outside the classroom in more informal contexts. On the one hand teacher participants expressed disappointment with student behavior and tended to regard it as irresponsible in the light of the program's objectives. Lack of student motivation in using French with peers put teachers in the

unpleasant position of having to act as enforcers of the "no-English" rule in classrooms. On the other hand, these teachers admitted that the school environment was not conducive to sustained communication in French and that it was therefore understandable that students should opt for the easiest route. Both teachers indicated that student communications in French were restricted by and large to classroom situations involving interactions with the teacher. Both expressed concern about the pressure tactics deemed necessary to encourage greater use of French among students in these situations. While Teacher B seemed to feel that some form of negative reinforcement was effective as a procedure for modifying student behavior, Teacher A relied solely on verbal reminders to achieve the same ends. Teacher A felt that negative reinforcement had not been effective in the past and that these procedures placed an extra classroom management burden on the teacher. Teacher A describes typical patterns of language use in the classroom in the first comment quoted below, then goes on to explain her attitude toward the use of negative reinforcement procedures more fully in the second comment.

(1) ... Quand je suis là, ils parlent en français dès que j'ai le dos tourné, ça retourne en anglais. ... On dirait à un moment donné qu'ils sont tannés ... pour eux c'est tellement facile de retourner en anglais qu'ils préfèrent ne pas faire l'effort.

(2) On ne peut pas le rentrer de force [l'emploi du français en salle de classe] ... moi, je suis contre ça forcer, puis forcer, puis pousser, là. ... L'enfant sait ce qu'il veut, à lui d'agir en conséquence.

Teacher participants demonstrated an awareness of the social distance which exists between the two streams of students within the school. Language was seen by them as having a dual role: on the one hand providing a positive in-group identity for bilingual students, while on the other hand symbolizing difference between the two groups and creating negative feelings among members of each one. Samples of teacher comments are provided below:

(1) ... Les quinze minutes de lecture ou d'écriture ... les septièmes me posent les questions. Ils vont me les poser en français parce qui'ils savent que les autres [élèves du programme anglais dans la même classe] ne comprennent pas.

(2) They [the students] identify Teacher A and I for example in the Junior High in terms of French and because of that they know that they're expected to speak French, so they do it. In terms of identity.

Teacher Assessment of Students' Competencies in French

In describing the communicative capabilities of the grade seven bilingual students teacher participants appeared to reflect opposing stances which were determined by their choice of emphasis and by their definition of the term 'bilingual.' Teacher B believed that the students were bilingual because they were able to "basically fluently communicate their thoughts and wishes in another language." Teacher B elaborated on his comment by stating that perhaps ten percent of the class were not able to meet this criterion, but that generally speaking the other ninety percent of the class could achieve it. The native-speaker, on the contrary, emphasized the limitations and frustrations experienced by students

and illustrated daily by them in oral speech. As a result Teacher A's point of view differs as indicated below:

> ... Pour les affaires élémentaires là, probablement ils sont capables de s'en sortir mais il ne faut pas pousser trop loin parce que tout de suite ils seront bloqués, tout de suite. C'est drôle quand ils parlent. Ils vont me parler trois ou quatre mots en français puis ils vont glisser un mot en anglais à travers prononcé avec l'accent français parfait. Je trouve ça tellement drôle ...

Differences of opinion undoubtedly vary owing to a different frame of reference by which to judge. Teacher B is comparing capabilities of bilingual students in French to those demonstrated by FSL students, or basing his comparison on personal experiences with language learning in earlier years. Teacher A is comparing capabilities of bilingual students to native speaker talk and the vast panorama of linguistic choices upon which the Francophone may draw. The term bilingual itself is sufficiently abstract to be interpreted in a variety of ways by different people. This seems to be the case with the two teacher participants in the research study.

Teachers Views on Learner Language

In assessing students' capabilities in French, both teachers have made reference to the number of persistent errors present in speech. Teacher B suggests that this is largely a function of the school environment where the two languages mix continually, although English is strongly dominant. Teacher B suggests that teachers too, may unwittingly commit errors in their own productive use of L2

because of the variety of teaching responsibilities they must assume in both programs, the pervasive influence of the language switching process, and the continual exposure to an anglicized version of French structures in student talk.

> One of the things [about the program] I find a little interesting, a little frustrating is to switch from English to French from one period to another where I do have to teach P.E. and Social Studies in English. Believe it or not it does take something away from it that ten minutes at the beginning of class. I will say something in English in French class and vice versa. I don't think it's <u>wrong</u>, it is a little frustrating at times.

Commenting on the school climate and the lack of motivation on the part of students for one reason or another to actively use their French, Teacher A felt that it was wrong to present French solely in academic situations. To be truly effective, the bilingual program from her viewpoint needed to encourage the spillover of French outside the classroom in order that students would want to use more French with peers. Her comments with regard to the structure of the program and its effects on interactions in French are cited below:

> ... Dans un sens on ne peut pas tellement blâmer les étudiants. C'est la façon dont ils s'y prennent pour essayer de leur montrer une langue qui n'est pas correcte. Ce n'est pas assez. Il ne faut pas que le français soit seulement dans la salle de classe. Il faut qu'ils en retrouvent un peu partout ... que ce soit un petit coin de la bibliothèque ou quoi que ce soit ... Il faut qu'il y en ait ailleurs que dans la salle de classe. ... Toutes les choses amusantes se passent en anglais.

The question bilingual teachers seem to be asking themselves is this:

How can we present a second language experience to students which is both rich and diverse and which authentically represents the target language in ways which are not entirely academic or subject-bound? It would appear from teacher comments that the bilingual program as it is presently structured is not providing a completely satisfactory answer to this question.

Impact of the Program on Teacher Activities

The third category of questions concerns the impact of the program on teacher activities outside the classroom. Major indicators framing the questions asked were teacher preparation activities and qualifications required for success within the program. In summarizing the opinions given by the two teacher participants in the study, it will be important to remember that both individuals are fairly inexperienced in the program and that this may have a bearing on the types of preparation activities which they engage in. Teacher B, a first-year teacher, stated that he was preparing lessons and adapting materials on a daily basis; learning on the job and utilizing resources available in the school library much the way an English-language first-year teacher would. He had no time to translate materials himself for use with classes where French resources were lacking at the time the research was being done. He was able to incorporate a role-playing trial episode based on the rebellion of 1837 into a grade eight Social Studies class during the observational period, but this was possible only because

the activity had been prepared as a curriculum project during his teacher training year. The teacher preparation activities of Teacher A, a second-year teacher, differed slightly from those of the first year participant in that less time was spent on daily lesson planning and more time, especially on weekends, on translation assignments of unit materials from English to French. With regard to numbers of hours spent on preparation activities, both teachers suggested that two to three hours a night was not unusual at the beginning of the year and at least half a day on weekends. Time spent in these kinds of activities varied depending on the time of year, the kinds of activities being carried out at the school and the marking loads of teachers. Clearly, project work correction required significantly more marking hours than objective tests. Teachers seemed to feel that more preparation was required of teachers in the bilingual programs owing to the shortage of materials and resources at this level.

Relevancy of Teacher Training for the Bilingual Program

The second question in this category dealt with teacher training and relevancy of training for the present task of bilingual teaching.[2] The background of both teachers is quite different and needs to be made explicit in the analysis of the comments. Teacher A is a native speaker from out of province. She holds a Science

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[2]See Jocelyne Beaulieu, "La Préparation des Enseignants Bilingues," M.Ed. Thesis. University of Alberta, 1980.

degree from a Francophone university and a teaching degree for the secondary level. She had no experience teaching Anglophone children prior to her arrival in Alberta and therefore found the level of language of the students the most difficult factor to adapt to. She was not sensitive to the need to simplify vocabulary and teacher presentation for her students before becoming "immersed" in the world of bilingual schooling herself, but has since attempted to gear her language to student comprehension levels. The non-native speaker has studied in English language and French language universities, and holds a teaching degree from a Francophone Faculty in Alberta. He felt his French language training guided him toward the goal of bilingualism but found that more emphasis could have been given to the second language learning "process" itself. This teacher felt that being an Anglophone in the bilingual school environment had definite advantages. These were: in communicating with parents about their child's progress, in establishing clear-cut and clearly understood guidelines for both students and parents, and in interpreting the source of student errors derived from English in speaking and in writing.

Desirable Qualities of Immersion Teachers

In speaking about teacher qualities desirable for bilingual instruction, both respondents mentioned empathy, patience and enthusiasm. The last quality was seen as perhaps the most important because of the demands of the dual task placed upon these individuals. The emphasis on energy and commitment mentioned by the

two teacher participants in the research study corresponds to comments made earlier by teachers in the pilot group.

Teacher Attitudes Toward the Program

Reactions toward the program as a whole were mixed, although the non-native speaker seemed to indicate more enthusiasm and confidence in the viability of bilingual education generally, than did the Francophone participant.

Teacher Satisfactions

The main satisfaction for both instructors was the actual experience of hearing French used by students, with a reasonable degree of accuracy in communicative contexts within the classroom. Teacher A comments in this way about her experience:

> C'est certain que, surtout quand tu es francophone d'origine, de voir que tes étudiants acquièrent ta langue, puis qu'ils connaissent de plus en plus de termes, que maintenant je peux leur parler de beaucoup plus de choses en français ... Plus ça va aller au cours de l'année, plus je peux avoir de contactes avec eux ...

Teacher B likewise comments on his satisfaction with students' performance in French by contrasting it with his own personal experiences, as cited below:

> I find that very rewarding in itself that these kids are so good. As a matter of fact, what I've said to all of these classes, and I've told them this maybe two or three times; I've said ... 'Vous savez, quand j'avais votre âge, je ne parlais pas français; vous êtes vraiment chanceux.' And they don't really understand that yet, but I really mean that and that's where the rewards have been.

In response to the question as to whether the satisfactions with bilingual teaching differed from those of other teachers in the school in the English program, Teacher A appeared more interested in academic, subject-oriented achievement than Teacher B, based on a comparison of the two comments below:

(1) J'aime bien voir qu'ils apprennent le francais ... mais j'aime voir qu'ils sont capables de réussir aussi. Puis comme les autres professeurs, tu te sens toujours un peu responsable de ce que l'enfant peut donner ... peut faire.

(2) When I look at teacher L [an English program Social Studies teacher], I think a lot of teacher L's satisfaction at the present time is that he knows what he's getting from his students; he knows how to go about and get it. But for me I feel at times rather insecure ... I'm not sure whether they're improving.

Part of Teacher B's "insecurity" may be attributed to the fact that one of his curricular subjects, Social Studies, is largely values-oriented and that values are difficult to evaluate in quantitative terms as well as the fact that he is new to the school this year.

Teacher Dissatisfactions with the Program

On the subject of frustrations with the program, teacher opinions may be divided first into frustrations with student performance and

competence, and second into frustrations with curricular materials. The latter have already been discussed under the first category on program structure. While on the one hand commending students for the level of French attained, teachers express sincere disappointment with their lack of application of their skills. Teacher A seemed concerned that concepts learned in Science, for example, would have no further development in high school years and therefore questioned to some degree the significance of her teaching as her remarks show below:

> C'est vraiment difficile ... Tu as l'impression d'enseigner ... mais tu te demandes dans le fond de toi ... peut-être que je fais ça pour rien ... C'est difficile d'être motivé d'enseigner dans un programme comme ça parce que tu n'es même pas sur que ça va apporter de quoi à l'étudiant.

While admitting that the milieu did not encourage greater use of French, Teacher A was disappointed that students did not make greater attempts to initiate conversations in French. Teacher B related that his greatest frustration was persistence of student error in both speech patterns and written compositions. He had difficulty coping with the fact that there appeared to be no transfer between knowledge about grammatical rules and application of these rules by students. Both of the main frustrations expressed by these teachers are typical of and distinctive to the bilingual teaching situation. This may suggest that teachers and program planners should focus on these issues in an attempt to devise effective means of dealing with them.

Teacher Persistence in Bilingual Teaching

In response to the final question in the interview schedule about desire to continue teaching in a bilingual program, both teachers responded in the affirmative: Teacher A seemed to be saying "yes", largely because of the novelty and richness of the experience and environment for her, as well as the possibility of contributing to the accumulation of adequate curriculum materials in Science several years hence. Teacher B appeared willing to continue because it offered him a better opportunity to utilize his highly developed skills in the language, as well as providing him with a greater intellectual challenge. No indication was given by either party as to whether they would recommend this type of teaching to other qualified teachers.

In summarizing the common themes which surfaced in both teacher and student data, we may state that these center around issues of school environment and the quality and quantity of program materials. Teacher data differ from student data in that there is a serious concern with student effort and correctness of second language productive skills, whereas students tend to view their basic level of French as good and consider it unnatural to initiate conversation with peers in the second language. Points of similarity and of difference between the two sources of data will be examined in further detail in the final section of this chapter.

Part 4: Comparative Analysis of Student and Teacher Interview Data

Introduction

Four generalized themes surfaced from a comparative analysis of student and teacher data. They are defined as follows:

1. Difficulties posed by the French language, focusing paticularly on vocabulary and the presence of errors.
2. Reaction to prescribed program materials
3. Adequacy of French library resources, and
4. Social relationships and the bilingual school climate.

Following a general statement about the main impact of the program on students and teachers, these four themes will be discussed under separate sections and the views of both groups carefully described.

General Statement about the Program as a Whole

The most significant aspect of the second language acquisition process for students is the speaking ability which they have acquired through participation in the bilingual program. To be able to communicate thoughts in French is viewed as a genuinely meaningful experience. The two teachers involved in the study also indicated that the possibility of conversing with students in French was the most exciting aspect of the program for them because it permitted ever-widening contact with students as unique individuals. However, this was by no means the only focus for

teachers at this level. Increasingly, they were attempting to strengthen the accuracy and fluency of students' command of written French in various subject areas.

Difficulty and the French Language

In spite of the importance given to the speaking skill in French by both the student and the teacher group, two significant problems were considered to be stumbling blocks in this area. These were lack of sufficient vocabulary and the mixing of French and English linguistic elements in the productive skills of speaking and writing.

Lack of Vocabulary in French

For the students, lack of vocabulary was a source of frustration because it complicated the expression of personal ideas in class. For the teachers, lack of vocabulary on the part of the students was also a source of frustration because it complicated the process of providing clear, accurate and easily understood explanations to the students. Not only did students in the research study express concern about acquiring accurate terminology in French for specific objects or events, but they also insisted on knowing the English equivalents for French vocabulary items. Thus, students appeared unwilling to acquire more French at the expense of loss of competency in English. Their concerns were influenced by expectations of future schooling at higher levels. Certain vocabulary was viewed by

them as being problematic because it did not occur regularly in conversational situations. Particular subjects such as Science were also perceived to be irrelevant when taught in French because the content studied would bear no relation to students' future schooling experiences. The importance of the social context of the program and future educational plans has a significant impact therefore on the ways in which students regard the value of the French language for communication between people. There appeared to emerge a feeling that because students do not see French being applied directly to the communication of scientific ideas outside school, that their motivation to attempt to communicate in French in this way in school is decreased. Teachers, too, struggle with the problem of relevancy of subject matter, but have tended in their comments to focus on the difficulty of establishing relevancy in the light of having to work with inadequate resources. It would appear that the two teachers involved in this study have struggled with limited success to convince students that the concept of transfer of learning will operate efficiently from subject matter taught in French to subject matter taught in English.

The power of the educational context in which the program operates seems to be working against them in this regard. Students' comments seem to indicate that bilingual schooling is viewed basically as an adjunct to regular schooling, not as a unique kind of schooling in its own right. The bilingual program as interpreted by the students offers the possibility of communicative competency in another language as well as presenting as closely as possible the

content of the English program; its emphasis, materials, philosophy and thinking. There is a sense in which bilingual students seem to want to be different, but also the same as their peers in the English program. The strong desire for 'equivalence' on the part of bilingual program participants has had some negative effects on program development and construction as reflected by teacher opinions expressed in the data. Many of the individual topic components in core subject areas are translations of English materials. Both Teacher A and Teacher B have commented negatively as to the quality and scope of translated materials. Teacher A focused on lexical errors in the texts in her remarks; Teacher B focused on presentational aspects and quality of the materials. There is some suggestion in the literature on immersion teaching, (Stern, 1978, p. 849) that program development in this field must not be directed toward translation of what is available in English, since materials of this nature would not reflect the unique perspectives of the French language and the culture it embodies, in an appropriate treatment of content and concepts. Immersion teaching based on these kinds of program materials would not engage students in some of the most vital aspects of the second language learning experience, which have to do with viewing the world in the "French" way.

Attitudes Toward Learner Language

A second stumbling block facing students in their efforts to communicate effectively in French is the problem of the mixing of

French and English elements in productive skills of speaking and writing. Although students are keenly aware of this fact of their language experience, they do not tend to regard it as a "problem" per se. By mixing French and English they are able to communicate their thoughts in what seems to them to be the easiest and most efficient way. Where mixing becomes a problem is the point at which teachers intervene, imposing corrective procedures or penalties as a result of what they consider to be inadequate communicative skills. Without teacher intervention it is likely that students in an immersion classroom would continue to mix French and English structures and vocabulary freely. Some students in the study expressed frustration with teacher corrective procedures, particularly as they were applied to oral speech in discussion settings. Corrective procedures were seen as preventing the student from expressing his or her own version of a particular idea.

Teachers in the study referred to the mixing of French and English linquistic elements in speech or writing as "interference" and associated it with errors. Error was generally viewed by both teacher participants in a negative light. However, researchers in the field of second language acquisition use the term code switching when referring to this phenomenon. Code switching is one of the many processes characteristic of learner language as it progesses through various stages of development. Both code switching and some other kinds of errors are now regarded by researchers in a positive light since they provide evidence that students are making progress in their acquisition of the second language. Despite this, since student speech and writing did not, on many occasions, resemble the

accepted native-speaker norm, teachers felt that corrective measures were in order. The amount of error present in student communication in French was attributed to two factors by Teacher A and Teacher B. The first of these factors was an unwillingness on the part of students to make a better effort toward improving and utilizing their skills in the school environment. Both teachers seemed to suggest that the maturity factor might have a bearing on behaviors here. The second factor was the inappropriateness of the school environment itself for encouraging maximum communication and interaction in French. A sense of resignation about the possibilities for modifying these factors permeated the comments of the teachers involved in the research.

Program Concerns

The second major theme evolving from a comparative analysis of the student/teacher interview data concerns the curricular content of the program. The catch-word summarizing student attitudes toward program content is 'boring'. The content is seen as boring by students because it is repetitive and is comprised of the same sorts of activities from year to year. First on the list of boring activities was language instruction focusing on grammar, followed by Social Studies. Students desired greater variety of activities within subject areas, as well as a wider choice of topics or units of study. Teacher attitudes with regard to course content paralleled to a certain degree those of their students. Gaps and inadequacies were cited in various subject areas, together with the

overall problem of lack of sufficient reference materials for teachers in French. No comments were made by either teacher in the interview data to suggest that teaching approaches should be varied in order to prevent tedium and loss of meaningful learning opportunities. An exploration of appropriate teaching approaches specific to immersion would nevertheless seem to constitute a vitally important and fertile area of research for the future.

Resources in French

A third common theme surfacing from the combined data is the issue of lack of suitable library resources at this level. All of the twenty-one students interviewed claimed that they researched projects partially or totally in English regardless of the language of instruction of the subject. This necessitated the translation of rough notes from English to French in the preparation of the final copy for the written report. The quality and accuracy of French suffered in the composition process as a result of this technique. Owing to the evident lack of materials, students seemed to feel that the French language was somehow inadequate to express certain subject-related concepts and that French resource materials in themselves were generally inferior in quality. The desire to investigate and discover new things may have been hampered because of the necessity for translation into French when communicating findings. Teachers, too, were critical of the kinds and amount of resources available in different subject areas because of the limiting effects on the presentational aspects of their teaching.

Teacher B seemed to be saying that audio-vidual media were lacking which could be used to increase student motivation and interest. Teacher A seemed to be suggesting that a lack of adequate teacher reference materials restricted teacher preparation and planning as well as instructional techniques used in the classroom. Whatever the emphasis, both teacher comments and student comments indicate a narrowing of both content and approach in the classroom as a direct result of the resource problem perceived at this level.

The Social Context of the Bilingual Program

Although students claimed that the most exciting aspect of the bilingual program was their productive use of the second language in speech, we have seen by examining the interview data that student communication in French is restricted largely to formal classroom settings which are teacher-directed. The notion of 'identity' which binds students in a bilingual classroom together in a homogeneous group effectively inhibits communication in French with other staff members who may also be French-speaking, as well as with other students of French as a second language. Student comments about speaking in French also show that a desire for authenticity or naturalness further inhibits communication in French with peers in more unstructured settings. The fact that several students mentioned the difficulty of making themselves understood with peers when speaking in French may indicate a certain mistrust of one another's competency in the language, even though this has been described previously as "quite good", "quite fluent". Further, the

influence of the peer group within the student body of a dual-track school, such as the one represented in this research suggests that there is a significant peer pressure to restrict communication in French to classroom settings. While students expressed some dissatisfaction with the bilingual school's possibilities for free communication in French, only one student out of twenty-one suggested that the students themselves had some responsibility for enhancing possibilities through increased self-expression in the second language. The general consensus among students seemed to be that more choices ought to be made available to them, in the library, in course options in French and in special learning activities such as exchanges or school trips. A greater range of choices would encourage more and better communication in French. The assumption underlying the remarks made by these bilingual students seems to be that as "consumers" of a program, they are "acted upon" as opposed to being "actors" in their own right who have self-initiating roles to play in expanding their communicative capabilities in French. This supposition is worth further exploration, since it may apply equally to students in the English program and as such, may provide a formative influence on the patterns of contemporary schooling as we know and experience them.

Teacher comments about the social context of a bilingual program in the class under study reflects an awareness and to some extent a resigned acceptance of the prevailing conditions. While deploring students' lack of effort to make more and better use of their communicative capabilities in French, both Teacher A and Teacher B seem to be saying that the odds discourage change owing to a somewhat

hostile environment and the "laws of human nature" which suggest that people will find the easiest route available to them and pursue that path until deterrents of a sufficiently strong nature are put in their way so as to modify behavior. Teacher B felt that by discouraging communication in English during the French Language Arts class through some form of negative reinforcement, he could effectively increase the amount of communication in the second language. This technique appeared to be somewhat effective, since the French Language Arts class was the one in which the greatest amount of student talk in French was observed. Teacher B also made reference to the teaching of culture in the classroom as a means to rekindle student interest in communicating more ideas in French. However, he felt that the telling approach was an ineffectual method of dealing with concepts and ideas which needed to be experienced by individuals in a vivid way in order to gain an understanding of them. Field trips, demonstrations by resource persons, visitations and exchanges were viewed as much more beneficial in this regard. Teacher A indicated that the bilingual program in a dual-track school required a special place separate from the classrooms themselves where French activities could occur on a regular basis. By providing such a place, French would be extended beyond the academic settings with which it had become most closely associated. Teacher A also affirmed the necessity for the development of bilingual programming which went beyond academic subjects, to include other types of subject matter and activities. The danger in relegating French instruction to academic core subjects alone meant that students tended to associate "fun" activities with English and

"hard work" with French. Teacher A's suggestion echoes a remark made by one of the students in the interview sample. However, on a more optimistic note, both teacher participants seemed to indicate that as more and more appropriate resources were developed in the various subject areas, both students and teachers would be able to make use of a greater variety of interesting topics to investigate. As student interest increased, so attitudes and effort were also likely to improve, eventually resulting in more communication in French in bilingual schools. As the population of the bilingual students within the dual-track school grew, more possibilities for meaningful peer interactions in French would be possible between class groups at the same levels.

The comments discussed in the student data, together with the more general findings of the pilot project would seem to suggest that the "waiting game" approach is an unadvisable strategy to take. By shoving our concerns about the social climate in which immersion programs operate under the carpet, we may be laying the groundwork for the demise of the immersion approach, or at the very least, seriously delaying possibilities for improvement.

The summary chapter which follows describes the basic characteristics of the bilingual classroom implicated in this study, raises some critical questions pertinent to a re-conceptualization of the immersion approach, suggests some procedures for change in the light of the findings presented and indicates areas for further research along the lines which this preliminary study has initiated.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

Introductory Statement

The summary chapter of the present research study has been divided into five separate sections. The first section returns to the original problem posed in chapter one and restates the issue in the light of what has been discussed previously. The second section recapitulates the methods employed to carry out the research and justifies their appropriateness for the questions being asked. The third section summarizes the general characteristics of the bilingual classroom which served as the research site in this study. The fourth section derives some important implications for bilingual schooling arising from an analysis of the interview data obtained. Finally, suggestions for further qualitative research within the field of bilingual education are described in the fifth and final section.

Restatement of the Problem

The basic problem of the research study was to describe and interpret students' attitudes toward their learning experiences in a

particular French bilingual class at the grade seven level. Supplementary research questions followed logically as a consequence of this primary purpose. These questions are listed below in the order in which they were addressed during the investigation. First, what was the nature of the day-by-day learning activities in the classroom under study? Second, how did these activities affect patterns of communication between the students and the teachers involved? Third, how did the two groups view the language acquisition process taking place in the classroom setting? Fourth, what similarities and differences emerged from a comparison of student and teacher views on the language acquisition process? Finally, what research implications emerge for second language teaching as a result of the portrait represented by the French bilingual classroom in the research study?

Recapitulation of Methodological Approach

The methodology employed in the research study consisted firstly of a two-week period of nonparticipant observation in the classroom, followed by individual or small group interview sessions with students and individual interview sessions with the two classroom teachers. The purpose of the classroom observational period in its initial stage was to familiarize the researcher with the students as well as the materials and activities implemented in the classroom. During this time the students themselves became accustomed to the researcher and her presence in their midst. This was seen as vital to the study because it helped develop an atmosphere of mutuality,

confidence and trust between researcher and participants which was essential to the success of the interviewing process. During the second stage of the classroom observational period, the researcher focused more closely on the patterns of communication visible in the classroom and the instructional procedures used by the teachers to elicit responses from the students. The researcher developed an instrument called the Language Utilization Record, a copy of which is found in Appendix III, to record approximate amounts of teacher talk and student talk as well as the kinds and quantity of teacher questions. The general patterns which emerged from the activities observed were compiled in the researcher's journal and information gathered by this method served as a point of comparison for student and teacher opinions expressed in the interview data. The researcher's journal also contained descriptive accounts of specific classroom events. These accounts proved to be a valuable reference when framing meaningful questions during the interview sessions with students. By referring to specific classroom events the researcher was able to conduct the sessions in the narrative mode, based on the re-telling of concrete experiences and thus to elicit specific examples of what students meant by their comments. After the field work in the school was completed, the researcher re-organized and rewrote her journal into the Observational Record, a copy of which is found in Appendix II. The framework for the interview sessions was developed during the pilot study in May and June, 1982, then refined prior to entering the research site in mid-October, 1982. Copies of the protocol materials developed for use with students and teachers are found in Appendices IV and V of this study.

Interview sessions with students took place during the month of November at noon hour in the counsellor's office at school. Most interviews lasted from half to three-quarters of an hour. Out of a total class population of thirty-two, twenty-one students were included in the student interview sample. Teacher interviews took place during the first week of December; one in the evening at the researcher's home; the other after school in the teacher's classroom. Teacher interviews lasted one hour in each case. All interviews were transcribed verbatim except for those parts which were inaudible or which were considered unrelated to the bilingual experience under study in the classroom. Both the transcription and the researcher's interpretive summary of the interview content were shown to student and teacher participants who then commented on the accuracy of the recorded conversations as well as the interpretation given to these by the researcher. Participants made necessary corrections to details reported and stated whether they were in agreement with what was presented to them. All original documents from the study have been conserved and are available for further examination upon request.

The researcher made several basic assumptions with regard to the methodology when conducting the study. Firstly, she assumed that the period of nonparticipant observation in the classroom would provide sufficient data to answer the questions about the nature of learning activities in a bilingual classroom and the general patterns of communication flowing from these. Secondly, she assumed that the interviewing techniques would provide sufficient data to draw out

participants' views about the language acquisition process taking place in the classroom. Thirdly, the researcher assumed that a comparative analysis of the student and teacher data would bring to light similarities and differences of opinion about language acquisition and that major themes relevant to bilingual schooling could be derived from the comparative process. Finally, the researcher assumed that an interpretive reading of generalized themes emerging from the interview data would be relevant to other individuals working in similar bilingual educational settings at the same level. By comparing prevailing classroom conditions described in this study with the aims of immerson/bilingual education generally, together with existing descriptions of the immersion approach available in the literature, it was assumed that it might be possible to suggest areas of research in need of further exploration in the field of bilingual education.

Portrait of a Grade Seven French Bilingual Classroom

The portrait of a grade seven bilingual classroom which emerges from this study is one in which the process of second language acquisition, formerly associated with aspects of affective, psychomotor and cognitive experience, has been reduced in large part to a cognitively oriented experience, divided up along subject area lines. The focus of learning at the Junior High level is less experientially-based and more content-oriented and as such, knowledge seems to be regarded as a product as opposed to an ongoing process. Students

at this level seem to be less actively involved in their own learning, a characteristic which may be related to attitudes about program content and activities which are seen by them as boring and repetitive. As a result of these conditions, as well as an evident lack of resources for teaching and learning, students' productive skills in the second language, speaking and writing, seem to be less frequently engaged than teachers and administrators would suspect. Emphasis on the academic content of subject matters taught in French tends to leave out the very critical aspect of the relationship of culture to language in the language acquisition process. By comparing the unique perspectives which the French language brings to a study of any subject matter, and by contrasting these with the perspective represented in the students' mother tongue, the humanistic benefits of a bilingual education are made available to participants. The portrait of a bilingual classroom which has been presented in this research study tends to ignore the notion of language as culture and as such seems to discourage rather than encourage self-reflection on the part of students with regard to the ways in which language, as a symbol of culture, shapes individuals.

Implications of the Findings for Bilingual Teaching

This section of the summary chapter returns to the interview data to review the specific problems raised by subjects and to suggest on the basis of these what immediate procedural steps might be appropriate to modify the learning environment in the Junior High

bilingual classroom. A second set of considerations of a more general nature also falls under the heading of implications; however, these ideas are organized under another section entitled "Re-thinking the Immersion Approach" which is included in Chapter VI, Reflections.

Turning first to the student data base, we find that "a loss of words", a "lack of vocabulary" was mentioned as a major difficulty for learners involved in the acquisition of French as a second language. This would suggest that the program, as presently structured, provides insufficient opportunities for students to actualize the vocabulary they already know and to extend the use of new vocabulary in conversational contexts. A developmental thrust toward a more integrated approach in core subjects taught in French, together with more and better discussion-based activities in class could assist students in the improvement of their speaking skills and thereby increase fluency in the expression of personal ideas as well as their desire to do so.

A second problem raised by students in the data referred to the "boredom" they experience in the French Language Arts class. Attitudes toward the second language in general appeared to be adversely affected by what was considered by them to be an overwhelming emphasis on grammar. Since it is vital to retain an active student interest in the French language as a mirror of the cultural perspective which it represents, a more varied approach to the teaching of French Language Arts seems to be recommended. For example, an integration of literature study with composition, reading comprehension, vocabulary study and grammar would seem to be

preferable to an approach where large blocks of time are devoted to one aspect of language study per se. A variety of language activities is particularly appropriate in light of the fact that the literature on language acquisition and the developmental stages of learner language (Corder, 1978: Krashen, 1981), tells us the transfer of knowledge about grammatical skills to their application in concrete situations is not generalizable to situations where student attention is not primarily focused on grammatical analysis. The acquisition of correct structures by learners is not affected by amounts of teacher repetition and drill, but rather by the developmental and individualized stages of learner language which evolve slowly over time.

A third issue raised in the student data was the pacing of instruction in French and in English classes. Students indicated that a slower pacing in French class was necessary to allow for "thinking time" and comprehension of teacher explanations in the second language. This affected ability groupings within the class differently. Abler students appeared to lose interest because of the repetition and the slow pacing, which was not as necessary for them in the same degree as it was for slower students. For the most capable students in the class, the content of instruction did not appear to be sufficiently challenging and complex. Possibilities for enrichment in the subject areas were limited by a lack of resources. Development of a variety of supplementary reading resources and activities in French for the most capable and highly motivated students might help to keep them interested. Conversely, a portfolio of reference sources in English collected for the small

number of weaker students, might serve to quicken their rate of comprehension and ease frustration with difficulties. The resources accumulated in English might also be used by teachers when tutoring struggling students in remedial sessions outside of classroom presentations.

Since the majority of students in this study were very insistent on knowing the equivalent English terms for French vocabulary introduced in the Mathematics and Science areas, a deliberate attempt to compare and contrast both sets of terms might be an appropriate introductory exercise to a new unit of work. The approach taken should emphasize differences in sound, spelling, sense and usage and be accompanied by appropriate examples relevant to the topic at hand.

Since students referred on many occasions in the data to the lack of library resources appropriate to their level of mastery in the second language and personal interests, for use in free reading and research, it would seem important to continue the search for such materials, allocating generous sums of money for their acquisition in school libraries in the future.

With regard to the issue of individual research projects assigned to students, it would appear from the data available that students rely heavily on translation of notes from English to French in the composition of written reports. In order to avoid this approach which maximizes the possibility of error as well as distancing the learner from the French language itself, teachers might find it effective to experiment with a variety of guided writing exercises in their classes, supervising the preparation of

rough drafts, to ensure that students make use of as many correct structures and vocabulary items as possible to which they have been previously exposed in classroom work. Alternatively, it may be appropriate to evaluate students' research on the basis of more and different kinds of oral reporting; an approach which would involve more sharing of information and which would draw on and enhance students' strengths in the speaking skill.

In an analysis of the patterns of communication inherent in this bilingual classroom, both students and teachers have indicated that peer interactions not mediated by the teacher generally take place in English. Students would seem to be utilizing their second language skills minimally in the school context, a situation whose seriousness is augmented by the lack of speaking opportunities outside the school. Procedures for encouraging greater student communication in the second language in school are therefore in urgent need of development. The focus of such methods should be geared to enhancing the <u>school</u> environment which constitutes the bilingual students' most single, important and continuous contact with the language. Opportunities for contact with a native speaker community by means of visits or exchanges should not be ignored, since the enrichment they provide cannot generally be obtained in other ways. However, not all students will be able to take advantage of these occasions and the long term benefits accrued from such experiences are hard to measure, (see Clément, Gardner, Smythe; 1977: Hamers and Deshaies: 1981) owing to the complex web of factors involved in each individual's experience. It is more likely that daily contact with stimulating activities in French will increase

student participation in the acquisition process, thereby creating a higher level of commitment to the program. Such activities might take the form of a media club where video-tapes and slide presentations could be produced based on school events; a literary guild where poems, plays and stories could be read and presented in dramatic situations; a cinéclub for the showing of short French films, with discussion following, a student newspaper, or a radio station. Some of the suggested activities might take place in the classroom; others might be organized as after-school activities. The organization of these kinds of motivational activities is a slow and sometimes tedious process, but their introduction into what seems to be an otherwise sterile second language environment, could conceivably create much more interaction and activity in French. In addition to initiating activities for enriching the bilingual school environment, it might be advisable to designate a special place in the school where activities could occur exclusively in French so that students would then identify the second language with a context other than classrooms related to academic work.

Turning now to the teacher data base, implications arising from the remarks of the two participants relate almost exclusively to the continued need for development of program materials and ancillary resources. Materials are required for teacher research and preparation of lesson and unit plans, as well as for students in terms of supplementary reading and research. There is a shortage of multi-media resources in French for use as motivational techniques in introducing new content and concepts to students. In order to foster the development of necessary resources, teacher participants

in the study felt that administrators should assume more of a leadership role in co-ordinating curriculum development projects. If possible, it was felt that a special group or committee should be organized within the department of second languages to undertake this role. Teacher participants identified two separate spheres of curriculum development; one relating to the production of new resources, another concerned with the evaluation of program materials presently in use in classrooms. These teachers felt that curriculum development in the bilingual program could not be based primarily on the efforts of individuals working in isolation in their classrooms. However creative such efforts might be, they could not adequately serve the interests and requirements of all bilingual teachers, working in a variety of schools at the same grade level. In order to best serve the needs of the greatest number of students and teachers involved in the bilingual program, effective curriculum planning would need to be carried out in group format, involving much discussion with all concerned parties. Another issue regarding curriculum resources was the need for revision of materials presently in use containing lexical and structural errors in French owing to inaccurate translation. Teachers recommended that revisions should be undertaken by specialists in the field in which the resources apply.

Isolationism in the classroom was an important theme raised by both teachers in the study. From their comments it would appear that more opportunities for consulation with bilingual colleagues in similar subject areas and grade levels would ease the feeling of isolation, promote discussion of common problems and facilitate a

productive flow of ideas as to possible solutions. In order to maintain a high level of productivity during such meetings, conditions under which they occur ought to be as favorable as possible. Class visitations and after school sessions are complicated to arrange and generally too brief to address effectively important issues. Therefore, these teachers felt that more in-school professional development days would be helpful to bilingual teachers in their task of developing, revising and evaluating resources to better the educational opportunities available in the bilingual classroom.

Suggestions for Further Research

The data obtained from this research study have proven relevant to a fuller understanding of the French bilingual program in a Junior High Class at the grade seven level. In order to further our understanding of the social context and impact of the program on students in the Junior High, other qualitatively based studies could be attempted along the lines indicated by the present research. Some suggestions for further studies are listed below:

1. The study could be replicated at another school at the same grade level to determine whether size of the school, characteristics of student population and factors of socio-economic status or cultural background would have any bearing on the opinions expressed by the students.
2. The study could be replicated in grades eight and nine to determine whether the maturing process would significantly alter

student perceptions about the language acquisition process and the bilingual program which facilitates it.

3. A full year investigation could be undertaken with regard to the conceptual difficulties experienced by bilingual students in a particular subject area such as Science, to determine whether the nature of difficulties changes with the topic presented, or with the amount of exposure to the subject area.
4. The preceding suggestion about conceptual difficulties of bilingual students in a particular subject area could be extended to a comparative analysis of difficulties encountered by bilingual and non-bilingual students in the same subject area and grade level. In addition to "difficulty" factors such as pacing of instruction, kinds of teacher activities and student activities, student achievement on teacher made tests, and questioning techniques of teachers could be compared and contrasted in the two classrooms under investigation.
5. An exploratory study with Junior High students could initiate different procedures designed to encourage greater peer communication in French in school, then test their effectiveness using questionnaires and in-depth interviews to determine student reaction to the procedures used.
6. An investigation could be undertaken comparing various error-correction techniques of several bilingual teachers at one grade level. An analysis of the effectiveness of procedures in use, with recommendations for effective classroom practice could follow from such a study.

Each of the studies suggested above could provide bilingual educators with more information about the learning conditions prevalent in contemporary classrooms. This data when reviewed in the light of the general objectives for bilingual schooling, could point to necessary modifications for improvement of the teaching and learning taking place within such classrooms.

CHAPTER VI

REFLECTIONS

Introductory Statement

This chapter, entitled "Reflections" is divided into two parts. The first section is written from the personal perspective of the researcher and describes some of the problems she encountered in undertaking the qualitative, naturalistic study which became this thesis. The second section is an attempt to reflect on the nature of the immersion/bilingual approach to language learning based on classroom observations as well as what has been written in the literature by way of a definition of this approach.

On Undertaking a Classroom-Based Naturalistic Study

At this point I want to examine some of my misgivings and problems which arose during various stages of my research study. It is important to do this because my analysis will reveal what I sought to accomplish in undertaking the study as well as to alert other researchers to the kinds of issues they may face when carrying out their own inquiries. I have used the term "naturalistic" research in its broadest sense, meaning field-based reseach which

occurs in a "natural" setting to which no outward modifications have been made. In this case the "natural" setting was a specific grade seven French bilingual classroom located in a dual-track school. My research emphasized the generation of hypotheses about what it was like for students to experience a bilingual program in this context rather than the testing of a particular theory or clearly developed position on this issue. I wanted to understand the situation as completely as possible in order to present a portrait of life in the bilingual classroom under study. The stresses and issues which I faced in conducting the study are described chronologically from the initiating stages to the presentational aspects of the report writing.

The germ of this study grew out of a prolonged period of reflection about the articulation of various stages of bilingual schooling during my teaching practice in the upper elementary grades. After having settled on the topic of students' attitudes toward their language acquisition process in the grade seven bilingual program, the problem then arose as to how I could proceed to answer such a question. I had decided upon a period of participant observation in a pre-selected classroom, together with in-depth interviewing techniques shaped by a pre-established framework of critical questions. However, I experienced considerable stress during the initiation of the project relating to the general, abstract nature of the question and the rather loosely structured methods I had chosen to investigate it. Would such methods generate meaningful data sufficient to answer the problem posed? My reading of the literature on bilingual education had

uncovered no studies describing classroom environments in any depth, nor any interview-based studies probing learners' reactions to their experiences. Since I was convinced of the value of a study of this nature for a clearer definition of the immersion approach, I persisted with my original plan, bearing in mind that some adaptation might be necessary on my part depending upon the school environment and the individuals which I encountered there.

The second set of concerns with which I had to cope related to the problem of gaining and maintaining access to the research site. I had first to convince School Board officials of the value of my study in order to be granted permission to enter the school, then persuade teacher participants of its importance as well. This process involved a series of conversations with the teachers in order to come to an understanding of what was being sought and the kinds of co-operation which would be requested from them during the course of the study. One of the major stresses which I experienced after having gained access to the research site was the crucial aspect of establishing a "right" relationship with the students. The entire project hinged upon the challenge of being accepted by them as a trustworthy individual in the classroom, since student attitudes toward me would significantly affect the kind of data I would be able to obtain in the interviewing sessions. I found that it helped to introduce myself at the outset as a university student with some previous teaching experience. Thus, I was someone with first hand knowledge of schools and classrooms, but who had no evaluative or authoritative role in the present situation. During informal conversations with students before or between classes, it

helped to talk a little bit about my own interests and to find out what students' interests were. We were on a first name basis during the field work, although it was harder for students to call me by my first name in the classroom setting than it was during the interview sessions. Students were being asked to give up part of their lunch hour to talk to me as well as to answer questions in class about difficulty and reactions to activities taking place there. The issue of reciprocity then became important for me as researcher. What would students get in return for their co-operation? I was keenly aware that some sort of incentive would increase their willingness and interest. My solution to this problem was simple but effective. I provided homemade cookies at each student interviewing session and for the entire class as a gesture of thanks just prior to my departure. The popularity of this tactic soon became widely known and the response was most enthusiastic! In addition to the cookies, I had taken some photographs of the students on a field trip in the early part of the participant observation period. These snapshots were made available to those desiring copies in the weeks that followed at a minimal cost. Thus, these simple procedures and increased familiarity over time helped to create an easy working relationship between myself and the students.

A third set of concerns surfaced once the second stage of the observation period was underway. At this time I was engaged in making detailed notes about the communication patterns prevalent in the classroom and the structure of the ongoing activities. I had begun experiencing feelings of overload about the data collection

process. How would I manage to organize all the notes and documents that were beginning to be accumulated in my journal? How was I to extract the most significant piece of information at the right moment in an interview which would trigger significant reactions from the students involved? The continual pressure to do "good" research was felt repeatedly at this point in the investigation. Several strategies proved helpful in coping with these stresses. Firstly, I re-affirmed the importance of my study with fellow graduate students in my field and related my concerns about amount and organization of the data to them. They in turn asked procedural questions which stimulated my thinking on ways in which I could organize the information by categories. I then experimented with these methods while continuing the collection process. Another helpful strategy was to include as many students in the sample as possible, to observe as many bilingual classes in all core subject areas as could be arranged, and to talk to as many resource persons on site as I could contact, including the librarian, office staff, administrators and bilingual and non-bilingual teachers. Undoubtedly, I did not obtain every possible piece of information from the research site, but I feel convinced that the data base which I gathered during the period spent in school was sufficiently varied to respond accurately to the questions asked.

The issue of reciprocity arose for teachers as well as for students and I felt it important to acknowledge the time and efforts freely given by the two teacher participants to respond to my many questions. In a sense my listening ear provided one form of sharing during noon hour conversations and spare periods where discussions

were held regarding the day-to-day management problems with the bilingual program. Secondly, on two or three occasions I provided supervisory assistance in the classroom when teachers were called away for brief consultations on administrative matters. The teacher interviews were originally scheduled to take place at my home following dinner. However, this proved inconvenient for one teacher owing to an unforeseen change of schedule. As a result, one interview took place as planned and the other occurred at the end of the day in the teacher's classroom a few days later.

The final set of concerns which I encountered when conducting the research study surfaced during the writing stages. I was concerned about whether the data would reflect negatively on the participants as well as the need to preserve their anonymity. I had committed myself to preparing an accurate and thorough representation of the learning situation. Therefore honesty was of paramount concern. In an attempt to avoid potential conflicts in interpretation, or at the very least to provide participants with the opportunity to react to my interpretation of the situation, I verified the content of conversations with the respondents together with the interpretations given to them. In view of the fact that some negative aspects of the classroom environment which surfaced during the research study had also been brought up in the pilot project interviews, I concluded that these aspects were not specific to the teachers and students involved in this study, but rather were generalized problems with immersion classrooms at this level. As such, these problems required a careful discussion in the final research study report.

While I experienced many procedural problems during the course of this study, I feel convinced that the insights I gained and the satisfaction I experienced during interactions with participants deeply enriched me as a person and helped to advance my reflections on what it means to teach and to learn in bilingual classrooms.

Re-thinking the Immersion Approach

In the chapter on "Review of the Literature," immersion programs have been defined as an intensive and functional approach to language teaching. The functional approach focuses on the communication of meaningful content material through the second language (in this case, French). Researchers such as Stern (1978), Swain and Lapkin (1981) and others have suggested that the functional approach not only expands greatly the number of new situations in which the second language may be utilized in the classroom, but that it also increases the "genuineness" of communicative acts generated therein owing to the switch in focus from language to communication.

A number of questions may be raised with regard to this definition of "functional", bearing in mind the characteristics of the bilingual classroom which have come to light in this study. First, to what extent it is possible to focus away from a conscious reflection on language in communication acts occuring in a language other than the mother tongue? Second, what are the recognizable

characteristics of a genuine communication act? Third, since the functional aspects of immersion teaching are incorporated into the study of other subject matters, what kinds of experiences should immersion teachers organize in the teaching of these subjects which would foster "genuineness" in communicating? Fourth, what personal characteristics ought immersion teachers to possess in order to effectively carry out their tasks? This research seems to indicate that by simply allowing for more exposure time to French through instruction in other subject areas, we do not necessarily create "genuineness" in communication acts. Much more is required besides. Practically speaking, immersion or bilingual teachers have dual interests in their teaching practice: an attention to language teaching as well as an attention to the teaching of a body of subject matter content. Both activities are in theory being carried out at one and the same time. Is this in fact happening? How does attention to two quite separate tasks affect the teaching practice of immersion teachers with regard to subject disciplines? The present study seems to suggest that a narrowing of the range of experiences open to students and teachers is the result of this dual focus, and further, that neither task is addressed as adequately as could be expected in this context.

In a recent article entitled "Learner Language and Teacher Talk", S. Pit Corder makes a distinction between language teachers and other kinds of teachers in the following statement (Corder, 1978, p. 5), "... thus, teaching a language is a use of language to teach a use of language. This sharply distinguishes language

teaching and learning from the teaching and learning of other school subjects." What notions about language itself are we communicating when we attempt to do two jobs at once? It would appear that the representational aspects of language are glossed over in our attempts to communicate subject "content." We may be short-changing our immersion or bilingual students when we teach Social Studies or Science in French by means of translated materials particularly, because we are not reflecting the French way of looking at that subject, but rather an English version of the same concepts through the vehicle of "French." In this way, we are not communicating the relationship which exists between language and the world it embodies. This lack is crucial since it forms the essence of the relationship of language to culture, as pointed out by Carolyn Durham (1980, p. 221), in her recent article on foreign language teaching:

> This essential idea - that a relationship exists between the exterior world as we perceive it and the linguistic form of our thoughts and of our culture - makes of language at one and the same time the mirror of a culture and its instrument of analysis and creation.

It would seem that the present structure of immersion and bilingual programs as we know them now does not adequately demonstrate to students that language <u>is</u> culture. Hence the form of their knowing in the second language is a superficial knowing. The bilingual student's knowledge about the second language differs from that of the <u>FSL</u> student only in terms of "amount" of language learned, not in the quality of the student's relationship to that language. The

fact that bilingual students attitudes did not in general reflect a greater empathy for French or respect for the culture it represents provides an indication of the superficial knowing which they have acquired.

This brings us to the point in our discussion where we must raise the question, "What does it mean to know a second language?" A sequel to this query follows directly from it, which is, "How are human beings transformed by their knowing of a second language?" Mills F. Edgerton Jr. has outlined two qualitatively different but interrelated kinds of knowing concerning language learning. His remarks are very significant for our argument and are quoted at length below, (Edgerton, 1980, p. 224):

> First of all, then, what I mean when I say that someone "knows" French, for example, is that in familiar circumstances he or she understands, speaks, reads and writes the French language not only with ease but without conscious effort and, most importantly, that he or she knows what native speakers mean by French words, what sorts of perceptions of self and of the surrounding world syntactical choices are used to signal; and what presuppositions and implications each of the available alternative ways of expressing "the same thing" entails.

The results from the present research study obtained by observation and interviewing suggest that the immersion approach is effective in promoting the first or surface level kind of knowing, but that it has not been successful in providing students with deeper understanding of the second language as it relates to cultural perspectives. This is a crucial shortcoming, since immersion programs were originally devised as a means of gaining greater understanding of persons through language in an attempt to bridge the

"two solitudes" of the founding nations in Canada. The humanistic concerns related to knowing a second language provide the seeds for individual transformation and growth. Knowing a second language intimately and personally can enrich self-awareness and the different ways of interpreting one's own culture as well as the cultures of others around us. Bilingualism offers the promise of greater spiritual freedom for the individual through knowledge about his formative roots and promotes a genuine and profound respect for other cultures through and by language. The promise which bilingualism holds out for individuals is unlikely to be realized by immersion or bilingual programs if the humanistic kind of knowing described above is not reflected by the curriculum and by the pedagogy of classroom teachers. We may raise the question, "Does the immersion approach in its present form and philosophy represent a humanistic orientation to language acquisition?" The findings and interpretations of this study at the Junior High level seem to suggest that it does not.

Two developments may be required in immersion programs in the future. The first is the development of teaching techniques which create a <u>higher</u> level of <u>active</u> participation from learners regarding their individual language acquisition process in school. The second is an increased attention on the part of teachers to the semantic field surrounding the French words themselves in order that similarities and differences between French words and English words may be more clearly represented to learners. In this way the student may acquire a finer sense of connotations of French vocabulary for the native speaker. By coming to an understanding about differences

in expressive intent, the language student can gain an interest in and respect for the words themselves. As differences are comprehended, their strangeness is erased and the words become a part of the learner and his knowledge of the world.

There is a need for bilingual educators to clarify the linguistic, cultural and pedagogical goals inherent in the immersion approach. These goals must be communicated to the parents and students who will continue to commit their time and energies to bilingual schooling. By clearly stating appropriate objectives for language learners and by developing procedures to realize them effectively in classrooms, all participants will be informed both about the very real strengths and the limitations which apply to immersion programs. The kind of knowledge necessary to develop such objectives is acquired through a mutual showing of perspectives between researchers and teachers in a meaningful dialogue between theory and practice.

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APPENDIX I

PILOT PROJECT PROTOCOL MATERIALS

PART A: GUIDING RESEARCH QUESTIONS STUDENT GROUP

Theme Questions:

1. How do you feel about being part of a bilingual French program?
2. Why do you want to learn French as a second language and become bilingual?
3. Why do you want to continue in the bilingual program next year?

OR

4. Why do you want to drop out of the bilingual program next year?

Questions re the Student's Environment

Part A: School

1. What activities do you do everyday in your classroom to help you learn French?
2. What are the different situations in which you speak French in the classroom?
3. How do you learn about people from other cultural backgrounds in your classroom?
4. What other subjects are taught to you in French in school besides French Language Arts?
5. What do you like about your daily classroom experiences?

Guiding Research Questions Student Group PILOT PROJECT

6. What do you dislike about your daily classroom experiences?
7. When does your classroom participate in French activities with other classes? Which ones? When?
8. What kind of homework do you have to do in French at night? How much do you have to do on the average?

Questions re the Student's Environment

Part B: Home

1. Does someone in your family speak French?
2. Do you have any contact with French-speaking people in your community, in your province or in other parts of Canada?
3. Do you have any contact with French-speaking people in other parts of the world outside Canada?
4. Compare your parents' knowledge of French to your own. In your opinion, do they know more French, about the same amount or less than you?
5. Do you speak French to anyone in your family at home?
6. Do your parents help you with your homework in French?
7. Do you ever watch the French T.V. or listen to the French radio? If so when and what programs?

Questions re the Student's Personal Feelings

1. Would you like to speak French with people you know outside the classroom?
2. Would you like to speak French with people you don't know outside the classroom?

Guiding Research Questions Student Group PILOT PROJECT

3. Do you ever have the feeling that you would like to avoid situations where you have to talk in French? If so, when and under what conditions?
4. How often do you try to find situations where you will have a chance to speak French?
5. Would you like to speak more often in French with people whose first language is French?
6. Describe your feelings when you talk to French-speaking people in French.
7. Why do you think your parents want you to become bilingual?
8. How important is it to know about how other people of different cultural backgrounds within Canada live and work daily?
9. What is the best way to learn about how other people from different cultural backgrounds live?
10. Would you like to participate in any activities done in French in your neighborhood?
11. What do you now know about French-speaking Albertans?
12. What do you know about French-Canadians living in Alberta?
13. What do you know about French-speaking people from other parts of the world who are now living in Alberta?
14. Do you like reading stories, magazines, newspapers, etc., in French?
15. How important do you think it is to make friends with French-speaking people when you are trying to learn their language?
16. Do you discuss French-English relations in Canada in class?
17. Do you discuss French-English relations in Canada at home?

Guiding Research Questions Student Group PILOT PROJECT

18. Do you discuss Canadian politics in your class with your teacher in school?
19. Do you discuss Canadian politics with your parents at home?
20. Why do you like being in the bilingual program?
21. What are your feelings when you speak French in front of the whole class?
22. How easily can you introduce yourself or a friend of yours to another person in French?
23. How easily can you ask directions to a store in French? Can you understand a quick reply well?
24. How easily can you give directions to a local store in French?
25. If you were to move to a French-speaking part of Canada, such as Québec, how important would it be for you to acquire French?
26. If you were to move to another place where a different language was spoken other than French or English, how important would it be for you to learn the language of the people there?
27. If there were French-speaking families in your neighborhood would you speak to them in French?

Questions re the Student's Relationships with Peers

1. Do you work with classmates on projects together in French?
2. While you are working together on a project in French do you speak to one another in French?
3. Do you correct your classmates when they make mistakes in French when they are speaking or writing?
4. Do your classmates correct you when you make mistakes in French when speaking or writing?

Guiding Research Questions Student Group PILOT PROJECT

5. When do you talk about learning French to your friends in the bilingual program?
6. How many of your friends are in the French bilingual program: most, many, some, a few?
7. How many of your friends are in the regular English program: most, many, some, a few?
8. Do you stick together as friends in the bilingual program at recess, after school, intra mural school teams, etc.?

Questions re the Student's Relationship with the Teacher

1. Do you enjoy being in your teacher's class?
2. Do you have the opportunity in class to talk to your teacher about things other than school?
3. Do you like to talk to your teacher about things outside of school?
4. When do you talk to your teacher about your personal interests and other matters other than school?
5. Does your teacher tell you about what he or she likes to do in his/her spare time?
6. Have you ever done anything unusual as a class group with your teacher? For example, have you ever participated in some special sporting event or cultural exchange?
7. If you have been on a special excursion, or participated in some different and unusual activity, did you find it easier to talk in French to your teacher during this time?
8. Does your teacher use his/her hands a lot when talking?

Guiding Research Questions - Student Group PILOT PROJECT

9. Does your teacher vary the tone and expression in his/her voice when talking?

10. When was the last time you enjoyed a humorous experience with your teacher and fellow students in class? Please describe the event.

PART B: GUIDING RESEARCH QUESTIONS TEACHER GROUP PILOT PROJECT

Theme Questions:

1. How important is your role as a bilingual educator in the classroom, as representative of a particular language and culture, for a group of English-speaking Canadian students?
2. How successful are the bilingual programs as presently implemented in helping to create bilingual students, seen from your perspective?
3. What have been your personal classroom teaching goals as relates to your students and their particular stengths and weaknesses this past year?

Questions re Self in Relation to Program

1. Please describe the relative level of competency which the majority of your students have been able to achieve this year. (i.e. What are they capable of communicating orally, and in written work, with a relative degree of fluency and maturity for their age?)
2. Please describe the different types of communication that go on during your class. (i.e. Informal, formal, teacher-directed, student-initiated, question and answer, etc.)
3. Does one teach 'culture' separately from language or as an integral part of every French Language Arts class, where it fits in with prescribed concepts or material?

Guiding Research Questions Teacher Group PILOT PROJECT

4. Please describe briefly some implementation strategies which you have employed in the teaching of a subject matter in French recently. (i.e. Etudes Sociales, Sciences, Maths)
5. How important are experiences in French involving contact with other Francophones outside the classroom to your students and their desire to learn French? If you have organized any special excursions this year, or if you have plans to do so for next year, please describe the general details of such experiences.
6. How meaningful is the present research on immersion programs to you both personally and professionally? (e.g. Canadian Modern Language Review, etc.)
7. In your opinion, are the research findings on immersion programs meaningful for the parents of the children in your class?
8. Why do YOU think the parents in the school community seek bilingual education for their children?
9. In your opinion, which is more important, mastering the grammar of a second language first, or developing oral communication skills?
10. Can a student be considered proficient in a second language before he/she is able to master the four skills?
11. Is contrastive analysis of L1 and L2, that is to say French and English, useful in bilingual classrooms, and if so under what conditions and in what teaching situations?
12. How closely are academic success in French and motivation to continue in the program linked in your experience of the program and its participants to date?

Guiding Research Questions Teacher Group PILOT PROJECT

13. What kinds of audio-visual materials do you rely on to illustrate and teach the content of your program? How do you go about obtaining these materials?
14. Is there an opportunity within the context of your classroom and program to provide for some types of individualized learning? How do you integrate this into the whole? Is individuation useful to the acquisition of French as a second language?
15. What techniques do you use for error correction during class? If you have more than one method or approach, when do you decide to use one as opposed to the other? Under what circumstances?

Questions re School/Home Communication Link

1. How important is parent involvement in the bilingual program?
2. In what ways have the parents at your school been involved with educational activities for Bilingual students this year?
3. Have you communicated your PERSONAL classroom goals (agenda) and methods to the parents of your students this year?
4. Do you know of any ways in which the parents of your pupils encourage the study of French as a second language and bilingualism generally for their children at home?
5. How often and under what conditions (generally speaking), have you communicated with the parents of your students this year?

Guiding Research Questions Teacher Group PILOT PROJECT

Questions Relating to Student/Teacher Relationships

1. How do you attempt to create situations of authentic communication in the classroom?
2. How do you attempt to create situations of authentic communication between groups of students in your class?
3. How do you modify your speech (if at all) in French to meet the comprehensive needs of your students when teaching?
4. Please describe the way in which your speech and manner of communication in English differs from your speech and manner in French (if at all).
5. Please describe a situation in class where you really felt that you were communicating WELL with your students.
6. Please describe a situation in class where you really felt that you were missing the boat with your students, where you were communicating poorly with them (conditions, context, etc.).
7. Do you use humour when communicating with your students in French? How much, how often, when, etc.?
8. How does the relationship which you have developed with this year's class differ from your last year's experience? If you have several groups at the same level, please briefly characterize the relationship which you enjoy with each one, then make comparisons between them.

PART C: GUIDING RESEARCH QUESTIONS PARENT GROUP PILOT PROJECT

Theme Questions:

1. How important is the acquisition of French as a second language in Canada today?
2. What are your reasons for having your son or daughter participate in the bilingual program in Edmonton now?
3. Why will you encourage your child to continue in the program?

OR

4. Why will you encourage your child to drop out of the program?

Questions re Parents' Encouraging Role at Home

1. Does your child talk to you about language learning activities which take place in the classroom?
2. Do you have any knowledge of French? If so, how much: a lot, a medium amount, little or none?
3. Please describe your experiences in the past relating to learning French.
4. How do you feel about those learning experiences now?
5. How effective is the bilingual program your child is presently enrolled in as a vehicle for learning French as a second language?
6. Do you have French-speaking Canadians among your friends, either in-province or out-of-province?
7. Do you have any French-speaking friends from outside of Canada?

Guiding Research Questions Parent Group PILOT PROJECT

8. Do you think that it is important to speak the language of the majority group when living and working in another country?
9. If you were to move to a French-speaking part of Canada, such as Québec, would you feel it important to speak the langauge of the majority group when living and working there?
10. Do you watch French T.V. or listen to the French radio with your children when at home?
11. Do you have knowledge of another language besides English and French?
12. Do you use this third language with your spouse? With your children and your spouse, when at home?
13. In what ways do you encourage your son or daughter to pursue the study of French in your home?
14. Do you encourage your children to use French outside of the classroom?
15. Do you have any contacts with cultural groups other than English Canadian or French Canadian groups in Edmonton?
16. Do you discuss French-English relations within Canada with your children at home?
17. From your perspective what skills does your child's teacher employ with his/her students to effectively communicate the French language and culture?
18. Do you feel that the ability to speak French has cultural, intellectual and social advantages? Why?
19. Do you feel that children educated in French immersion/bilingual programs are likely to lose their English Canadian identity?

Guiding Research Questions Parent Group PILOT PROJECT

20. Do you feel that a person has more and better employment opportunities if he is fluent in French and English?
21. Do you feel that your child will need parental help to succeed in the French bilingual program?
22. Do you feel that your child will be able eventually as a result of the French immersion/bilingual program to speak French fluently?

Questions re Home-School Community Link

1. How often and on what occasions (times of the year) do you communicate with your child's teacher?
2. How, when and in what forms do you receive information about class activities?
3. How much do you know about the class goals your child's teacher has set with respect to the acquisition of French?
4. Are you satisfied with the amount and quality of information which you are receiving from your child's classroom teacher?
5. Have you been made aware of the literature on immersion programs in Canada by your child's teacher or by school administrators?
6. What are the teaching skills necessary, in your opinion, to effectively teach in a French bilingual program?

Guiding Research Questions Parent Group PILOT PROJECT

Questions Relating to French and the Community (Parent-Parent Interactions)

1. How much do you know about the research done in Canada on French immersion and bilingual programs?
2. Have you ever had any contact with the organization "Canadian Parents for French?"
3. Do you communicate with other parents about the bilingual program as it is run in your school?
4. Do you visit French-speaking parts of Canada with your children?
5. Have you enrolled your child in any summer camp activities run in French in the Edmonton area or elsewhere?

APPENDIX II

THE OBSERVATIONAL RECORD

Introduction

The classroom under study has thirty-two grade seven pupils. Eleven of the students are boys; the rest are girls. Almost all students have been enrolled in the bilingual French program since kindergarten. Less than half the students live within the school boundary. The rest are scattered throughout the Western portion of the city. Consequently, a number of them would have transferred from other elementary schools where the bilingual program was offered in order to attend grade seven at this school. These students are the third group to come straight through the immersion/ bilingual program in the Edmonton Public School jurisdiction since the program's inception.

Description of Observational Period October 13 - October 29

This report is an attempt to synthesize observational experiences for the purpose of analysis to be used as a basis of interpretation for student and teacher interview tapes. The researcher believes that it is vital to 'set the stage' in a methodical and careful manner when going about descriptive research

of a classroom situation. Equipped with a clear picture of the characteristics of the teaching-learning situation within which participants dwell, we can come to a better understanding and appreciation of the significance of participants' thoughts and opinions about their experiences.

The record is divided into several sections and sub-sections. The first major section describes the content of lessons observed and is sub-divided into subject areas. The second major section contains a more general school profile, where matters such as time-tabling, integration procedures, class sizes, class population and library facilities are discussed. The schema of organization of the observational record is laid out in the following manner:

Section 1: Lessons Observed

- A. French Language Arts
- B. Social Studies
- C. Science
- D. Math
- E. English-Stream Lessons Observed
- F. Summary Statement Re Lesson Observations

Section 2: School Profile

- A. Participants of the Study (Students and Teachers)
- B. Students' Experience of Bilingual Program at the Research Site
- C. School Population
  Breakdown Class by Class - English/French
- D. Geographic Location of Students' Homes
- E. Grade 7 Class Groupings (French and English)

Section 2 (cont'd)
F. Time-table: Junior High Organization
G. Library Facilities
H. Portraits of the Teachers
I. Teachers' General Comments about the Program

Section 1 Lessons Observed

A. French Language Arts

Between October 13 and October 29 six French Language Arts classes were observed. All took place on either Wednesday or Friday mornings during the first period of the day which extends from 8:55 to 9:35 a.m. One of the six lessons was unable to be used for observational purposes owing to vaccinations for the grade seven girls. Since there are many more girls than boys in this particular class, the lesson was abandoned and the boys played board games in French during the period in question. General content of other lessons observed included grammar exercises, a dictation, a guided writing exercise in the form of a short composition, oral reading, comprehension and literary interpretation, all based on a short passage. The teacher of French Language Arts appears to prefer handling language skills by teaching them in discrete units: Le Conte for four weeks; grammar for four weeks; novel study for four weeks then back to punctuation and composition. This type of approach is no doubt influenced by availability of teaching materials as well as by personal choice. Grammar lessons taught dealt with concepts such as the definite, indefinite and partitive articles, as well as recognition of conjugated verbs within clauses,

as opposed to participles used as adjectives. Students have seen all of these concepts in previous years, yet did not appear to find the work excessively easy. Once placed in a 'grammatical frame of reference,' students were able to pick up errors made by fellow classmates at the board. They responded to requests for correction from the teacher with enthusiasm and could by and large supply reasons why correction was needed. In spontaneous oral speech and in written work, the same critical, analytic skills were absent and a large number of glaring errors could be observed. This was perhaps owing to the fact that the demands of expression and communication of the message took precedence over demands of grammar and form. In the case of the guided writing exercise, the teacher had provided the students with a short vocabulary list of words to be used in a creative composition the night before. Some words given were: "une forteresse", "un château", and "gigantesque." Students were to come to class with their rough draft, read it to a friend and revise it carefully. Another day was given to finish, after which the students were to hand in their work. As I circulated about the room, watching the revision process, I noted that most students proceded with the task individually, bilingual dictionary in hand. Three or four students read their compositions aloud to me, at my request. Oral reading was, in almost all cases expressive and fluent. However, students "read over" major grammatical and structural errors as if they were not there. On one occasion I was asked for some help in expressing an idea in correct French. I made a suggestion, then invited the student to check it in the dictionary. Based on lessons and activities observed to

date, there appears to be much routine manipulating of French structures going on, but little development of a deeper feeling or instinct for how a particular idea is expressed in the French way. This is probably a result of the fact that students are not "immersed" in the language in the same sense that French speakers, coming to Edmonton, would be "immersed" in English in such a school. The general pattern of communication in Language Arts classes in French tended to be tripartite alternating between teacher-question, student response, and teacher correction and/or clarification. Students sometimes displayed a tendency to shout corrections to other students answering teacher-initiated questions. This tendency was discouraged by the teacher in an attempt to proceed in a more orderly fashion and to facilitate exchange of answers on a more individual basis. When the blackboard was used as a means of correcting students' answers, the "waiting time" between copying of the student's answer on the board and its analysis by the teacher and other students was regularly used for socializing in English by individuals at their seats. Often this waiting time "hung heavily" in the class, slowed down the speed of interaction and instruction, and resulted in a loss of focus among some students. A large portion of the lessons in Language Arts observed to date has been taken up with correction. On one hand, this observation may be a reflection on one teacher's instructional style and priorities. On the other hand, it may be symptomatic of the way in which language is represented to learners. In commenting on students' patterns of errors in written French, this teacher made several references to 'rules' and the necessity of students for

memorizing these rules in order that they be properly applied. When students have the opportunity to explain the meaning of vocabulary items in their own words, or to expand on an idea introduced in a reading, they are sometimes stopped by a lack of vocabulary. When the student chooses to insert the English word required, the teacher has a tendency to stop the communication and ask the student to struggle to come up with the word. If the student being addressed is unable to supply the missing item, others are called in to help. Sometimes the initial communicator is able to pick up where he or she left off in the thought. At other times, the thought has disappeared and the student stops talking. Sometimes the correcting student takes over the responsibility of finishing off the message and the originator is neglected. Students most frustrated by the "go-stop-go" interaction patterns were those with lots of ideas, but a lower level of capability in French.

B. Social Studies

Between October 13 and October 29 five Social Studies lessons were observed. Two of these took place on Wednesday mornings from 11:01 to 11:41. Three took place on Friday mornings from 10:19 to 10:59. One of the five lessons was disrupted for a vaccination check for the girls. No instruction took place during this lesson. The general theme under discussion was Multiculturalism. Learning resources were contained in the Kanata Kit "Cultures in Canada" prepared for this level. Content of individual lessons included a discussion of the term "Ethnic Group" and what it meant, a test in

current events, group work on graphs of ethnic populations province by province, correction of homework questions on "Periods of Immigration in Canada," and individual student research on a project involving Canada's ethnic groups, both in class and in the school library. Patterns of classroom interaction during these lessons were also of a question/answer type. Teacher-initiated questions did seem to be more divergent than in Language Arts classes, although a strong controlling element was still observed. Students have a desire to express personal feelings and experiences when they are asked in a genuinely interested way. The teacher, however, tends to cut off student communication once the thoughts begin to ramble and veer off the central issue. The teacher appears to jump in and dominate the student's message before he or she has time to organize it and "get rolling." Periodically, the teacher asks a question for which he has a specific response in mind. The question is reiterated until the answer which he is looking for is given. The extent to which teachers dominate and control classroom language in the second language/immersion context is clearly underlined by these observational experiences. Interactions between students at their seats concerning answers to homework questions took place for the most part in English. Interaction between pupils during the group work session on graphs and ethnic populations also took place mainly in English. Students always asked questions of their teacher in French, no matter whether they were related to subject content, classroom organization, or other unrelated issues. When beginning to organize themselves for research, most pupils displayed a high degree of confusion and frustration as to how they should proceed.

They appeared not to know how to organize themselves and sought 'structure' from other classmates and from the teacher.

C. Science Lessons Observed

Seven Science classes were observed between October 13 and October 29. One class consisted of a field trip to observe a beaver habitat at Whitemud Creek. This excursion took place on Friday, October 15, from noon to 3 p.m. Another class on Friday, October 29 was 'inoperative' from the point of view of instruction, due to a visit from elementary children dressed in Halloween garb. Three of the remaining classes took place on Wednesday, from 9:37 to 10:17 a.m. Two occurred on Thursdays from 2:10 to 2:50 p.m. Two general themes were discussed during this time: The Beaver and its Habitat and the Biological System of Classification for Living Things. During the first lesson observed, students presented group reports on the beaver to the class. This was largely a listening exercise and there was very little interaction in French, between teacher and pupils and the pupils themselves. The oral communicative competency of students varies widely. Those with more poise and self confidence generally perform better and are more easily understood in front of the class. Leaving personality factors aside though, the number of structural and grammar errors noticeable in oral speech is somewhat surprising for the number of years and exposure to the language which these students have had. Subsequent discussions with the students concerning their research activities suggested a possible

reason for the frequency of student errors in oral speech. To determine how students set about researching the project, I spoke to two groups of four students each, for about fifteen minutes per group, during seat work periods in class. Key questions were the following:

1. In what language did you do your research and why?
2. How did you organize yourselves?
3. How did the language of research affect the composition process of the written report?

About half the students questioned (from a total of eight) said that they used both French and English for their sources, although the emphasis tended to be placed on English materials. The other students questioned said that their research was conducted exclusively in English. The reason given was that French materials at an appropriate level were much harder to locate. Some students went as far afield as the Edmonton Public Library; most used the school library encyclopedias and unilingual English materials available from the unit of study. As far as group organization was concerned, students chose their own groups and organized themselves to delegate tasks. This was not particularly effective, according to the students, because personality conflicts arose and work loads were unevenly distributed. When asked about how the language of research affected the composition process, student opinions were divided. Generally though, most pupils thought the switch from English to French made the writing process more difficult since the correct terminology was not directly accessible to them. Some students expressed the opinion that they could learn more if student

sheets had been provided in French. All written materials on this unit were available only in English at the time of instruction. In addition, the objective-type unit test administered at the end of the unit was also in English. The second lesson in science observed by the researcher was the Friday afternoon field trip. Two grade seven class groups, one English and one French, participated as well as two supervising classroom teachers, the researcher and one "French" parent who met the group at the site. The English grade seven group had 20 pupils; our French group had 32. The large number of students in the French group made observation in teams very difficult. Students had trouble getting close to the beaver lodge and dams. In addition, they seemed preoccupied by the need to complete all the observational data on their question sheets rather than by the observational activity itself. Because the questions were in English, students chatted among themselves in English. However, they always addressed their teacher in French and frequently spoke to the researcher in French, although not consistently. During conversation with the same eight students in the school about their reactions to the field trip, the question of numbers became important. Students were frustrated by the fact that there were too many people milling about. This made observation difficult. They liked the part of the trip best where they were able to explore on their own, or in pairs away from their teams. They felt they were able to learn more about the beaver's habitat in that way. Many were frustrated by the waiting period at the end of the trip, before heading back to school on the bus. The third lesson observed was the in-class discussion and correction of observational

data. The teacher used a consistent pattern of generating responses. She would translate the English question into French, then ask for volunteers to respond. Students replied enthusiastically and the teacher chose several individuals to answer each question until a general consensus was reached as to what the right answer should be. Several versions were accepted when it came to questions about measurement. Generally speaking, when students lack vocabulary in French to express their thoughts, they inject the word in English and carry on. The teacher listens to the response, then provides the word or structure required. In the case of grammatical errors, the teacher listens to the entire message, then summarizes what was said by the student, supplying the corrective model where needed. Students will frequently repeat the corrected structure after the teacher has finished speaking without being asked. During the fourth observed lesson, students were given a review sheet on "Classification" - a unit which they had started before the beaver unit got underway. During this lesson some students were finishing off their beaver projects prior to submission, others were asking questions of neighbours about the material on the worksheet, which was presented in French. Most interactions between students, whether based on course content or on other matters were carried out in English. The following lesson based on a similar content was characterized by the same communicative patterns. Self-review and discussions were the dominant strategies employed before the test scheduled for the first week of November. During the last observational period in Science, the teacher returned corrected field notes to the students as well as

the group beaver projects. In private conversations with the teacher about the beaver projects, she expressed much discouragement about the students' abilities to communicate ideas in French. The frequency and type of error gave her considerable concern at this stage in the students' schooling. She expressed two different reasons to explain why such errors exist. On the one hand students do not seem motivated to make the effort, take the time and concentration required to self-correct. On the other hand, the errors may be explained by the fact that the students are not sufficiently 'immersed' in a French environment at school. The teacher also expressed the opinion that errors could disappear as students themselves mature, citing some grade nines as an example. Errors and how to cope with them in immersion/bilingual teaching appear to be a serious problem which gives both teachers concerned much cause for self-questioning and anxiety.

D. Math Lessons Observed

Three Math lessons were observed during the period October 13 to October 29. Two were held on Thursday afternoons from 1:28 to 2:08 and a third took place on Friday afternoon during the same time period. However, this lesson was disrupted by a Halloween costume parade of the younger children in the elementary wing and as a result, no formal instruction took place. A subsequent Math lesson was observed on November 12 from 1:28 to 2:08. The topic under discussion during these lessons was the solving of equations containing variables. The teacher used the board extensively, to

demonstrate different methods of solving equations. Students asked questions in French when they did not follow the explanations. The teacher repeated procedures to solve equations in a consistent order as a method for clearing up any difficulties which they experienced. There appeared to be some difficulty comprehending equations, especially when they were expressed in written form in the "Cahier d'exercices." Such phrases as "six retranché de treize" gave some students difficulty. The teacher had to repeat most explanations at least two and often three times before students "caught on" to what operations were necessary to solve the problem. In an interview situation with students which took place after the initial observation period, students stated that some pre-teaching of mathematical vocabulary had occurred and that this helped them to analyze problems and determine what was required to solve them. A word list had been presented to the students with vocabulary items categorized as to the basic operations which they indicated. "Retranché" for example would be classified under "subtraction." Almost all discussions between students at their seats with regard to the work took place in English during both periods. Error correction procedures used by the teacher during Math classes were similar to those used in Science classes. Student talk in Math classes in French was the most restricted in terms of type of language and level of vocabulary of all core subjects observed.

E. English-Stream Classes Observed

In addition to the bilingual classes observed five English-stream

grade seven classes were also visited, two of English, and one each of Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. The purpose of these visits was firstly to compare the kinds of classroom activities employed in both programs and secondly to compare the quality of language used by the English-stream and bilingual stream students.

In very general terms, the number of activities used in the English classes appeared greater. Also, the pacing of the instruction seemed more rapid. The English Science lesson may have to be excluded from the general statement since classroom conditions varied significantly from the bilingual setting in the same subject area. The English Science class took place in a larger, better equipped room, designated specifically for the teaching of this subject. The class consisted of only eighteen pupils, as opposed to thirty-two in the bilingual class. The smaller number allowed for more teacher-student interaction time.

In both the Mathematics and Social Studies lessons, classroom activities focused on teacher demonstrations and directed questioning. In these classes the quality of language in student responses paralleled fairly closely that of the bilingual students when reacting in similar circumstances in French.

In the English class, however, a discussion approach was employed. It was evident in this class that student language output was more spontaneous and idiomatic than the productive capacities of bilingual students in French. To check the comparison, two English-classes were observed: one regular English stream and one bilingual stream. The bilingual students appeared more relaxed and eager in their responses in their English classes than in their

other core area subjects taught in French. The English Language Arts teacher appeared to be using more indirect techniques in guiding the discussion than the bilingual French teachers used on a regular basis. The difference in quality of student language, when comparing French and English was most noticeable in discussion activities which were generally more prevalent in English-language courses. Quality of English communication outweighed French communication in these instances where students were attempting to develop an idea in some detail or describe a point of view to their peers and teacher.

F. Summary Statement Re Lesson Observation

This observational record uncovers several important issues regarding bilingual schooling.

First, students in grade seven seem to have acquired a high degree of proficiency in the listening and reading skills in French. Their speaking skills are adequate to meet their communicative needs with peers and teachers at their level. There is evidence to suggest however in the number of recurring errors in their speaking and writing that 'unstructured' communication with French speakers outside the school community would be problematic for them.

Second, classes conducted by both teacher participants in the study were 'content/curriculum' oriented, teacher-dominated and shaped by the question and answer approach. Teacher talk included a number of repetitions, both of questions asked and explanations given

to the students. Few opportunities were given for more extensive discussion time with and among students.

Third, the problem of inadequate resources in French was seen as a major stumbling block by teachers, with regard to their lesson preparation, and students, with regard to their information gathering strategies for project work. A decrease in amount of instructional time available solely for French and opportunities for significant switching between L_1 and L_2 appeared to be the by-products of this teaching-learning situation.

Section 2: Observational Record

A. Participants in the Study

Teacher A (female)

Teacher B (male)

Students	Sex	Students	Sex
S. 1	F	S. 17	M
S. 2	M	S. 18	F
S. 3	F	S. 19	F
S. 4	F	S. 20	F
S. 5	M	S. 21	F
S. 6	F	S. 22	F
S. 7	F	S. 23	M
S. 8	F	S. 24	F
S. 9	F	S. 25	M
S. 10	M	S. 26	F
S. 11	M	S. 27	F
S. 12	F	S. 28	F
S. 13	F	S. 29	M
S. 14	M	S. 30	M
S. 15	F	S. 31	F
S. 16	M	S. 32	F

Total Students:	32
Total Boys:	11
Total Girls:	21

B. Students' Experience of Bilingual Program at the Research Site

(exlusive of 82/83)

Since French Kindergarten	(7 years)	13 students
Since Grade One	(6 years)	5 students
Since Grade Two	(5 years)	1 student
Since Grade Three	(4 years)	2 students
Since Grade Four	(3 years)	2 students
Since Grade Five	(2 years)	1 student
Since Grade Six	* (1 year)	4 students
Transfer Students 82/83		4 students
(All from Edmonton Separate System)		
	TOTAL:	32 students

Notes:

All students transferring into the immersion/bilingual program at the research site after grade one came from French immersion programs elsewhere in the province or in Canada.

* One student who transferred in at the beginning of grade six had been attending a Canadian immersion program situated in Europe.

C. School Population

Grand Total	All Pupils	664
Grand Total	English Classes	267
Grand Total	French Classes	377

English Classes

Grade	Enrollment
Eng K	11
Eng 1 & 2	16
Eng 3	23
Eng 4	21
Eng 5	24
Eng 6	25
Eng 7(A)	20
Eng 7(B)	20
Eng 8(A)	26
Eng 8(B)	23
Eng 9(A)	30
Eng 9(B)	28

French Classes

Grade	Enrollment
Fr K (a.m.)	23
Fr K (p.m.)	21
Fr K (p.m.)	18
Fr 1	22
Fr 1	21
Fr 1 & 2	22
Fr 2	27
Fr 3	24
Fr 3	23
Fr 4	29
Fr 5	24
Fr 5/6	21
Fr 6	24
Fr 7(C)	32
Fr 8(C)	27
Fr 9(C)	19

D. Geographic Location of 7C Students' Homes

No. of students living within school's boundaries	10
No. of students living outside school's boundaries	22
Total	32

E. Grade 7 Class Groupings

For registration and administrative purposes all grade seven students, from both French and English programs have been integrated for homeroom periods in the morning, for intramural sports activities organized during the noon hour, and for silent reading and/or writing periods immediately after the afternoon bell. The short list of grade seven classes below shows how bilingual students are spread out among the classes.

Class	Enrollment	
7-7	10	French Bilingual students
	14	English program students
7-12	12	French Bilingual students
	12	English program students
7-14	10	French Bilingual students
	14	English program students

F. Timetable: Junior High

Periods	1	8:55 -	9:35
	2	9:37 -	10:17
	3	10:19 -	10:59
	4	11:01 -	11:41
	5	1:10 -	1:26
	6	1:28 -	2:08
	7	2:10 -	2:50
	8	2:52 -	3:32

a.m.	Assembly	8:45 a.m.
	Starting Time	8:55 a.m.
	Dismissal	11:41 a.m.

p.m.	Assembly	1:00 p.m.
	Starting Time	1:10 p.m.
	Dismissal	3:32 p.m.

G. Library Facilities

The school library is housed in one large room, located in the main hallway near the central office. When the librarian commented on the French book collection, she mentioned the shortage of appealing and interesting materials which were appropriate to the students' reading levels. Quite a number of fiction and non-fiction books are available for the young elementary children, but very few

books are available for students of Junior High age. Most of the books in the collection are either too easy or much too complex for students at this level. Ordering and cataloguing of books is a major problem. Books ordered which are not immediately obtainable from the local French bookstore, take many weeks to arrive from Montréal, France and elsewhere. Some sources do not provide automatic cataloguing, which means that either they must be sent downtown to central office to be properly coded, or else aides and/or volunteers must type up the necessary cards in triplicate. Cataloguing problems often create lengthy delays before the new books are able to be circulated to the students.

Owing to a chronic lack of space, French non-fiction materials are integrated with English materials. The best concentration of French materials is in pure science (animals and plants); but these books are simpler in content and format than their English counterparts. French fiction materials are divided into paperbacks, easy reading and hardcovers. Fiction materials are also geared, by and large, to the lower and middle elementary grades.

Reference materials in French consist of several series of encyclopedia. Most series are appropriate to the upper elementary grades as well as grade six and consequently are well-thumbed. One series, in the judgement of this librarian provides excellent information, but is too complex for students to use. Owing to the fact that non-fiction French materials are integrated with English materials, it may be less likely that students would consciously and deliberately seek them out, particularly if students felt they were

below their level of interest and understanding. A lot of "promotion" on the part of teachers and library staff might possibly be necessary, before students were to take full advantage of materials available to them.

In previous years at this school a French teacher was allocated to spend one half day per week in the library, attending to the selection and ordering of suitable library materials in French. At the time the research was being carried out, no teacher had been designated for this task for the current school year. The principal stated his intention to invite the bilingual program consultant to come to the school and interview teachers by grade level in order to determine what their reference needs were, but beyond that no plan had been formulated to facilitate the acquisition of more reading materials. However, prior to leaving the site, the researcher was informed by one of the Bilingual teachers that the principal had approved a substantial expenditure for the purchase of French novels for the library.

H. Portraits of the Teachers

i. The male teacher with whom the researcher is working is a first year teacher. He has been trained for his present position in a French language Faculty of Education. Major academic interests include Geography and Social Sciences. This teacher has a strong commitment to encourage independent student thought and has told students that this is one of his teaching objectives for this year. He speaks with discouragement about the common and recurring language

errors of his students in both oral and written speech in French. When questioned about the possible reasons for continuing 'embedded' errors this teacher suggested that a lack of discipline or rigor on the part of the students and teachers in the correction of errors in the past had permitted bad habits and incorrect structures to remain. He also suggested that students had a tendency to be satisfied with a minimal level of fluency in French conversation. That is, as long as the 'gist' of their message was understood by the listener, the language used was considered acceptable. Little concern was manifested by students as to whether or not the message communicated was given in French, or in some in-between dialect. By making mention of grammar rules, and the necessity of memorizing and correctly applying them, this teacher may be searching for ways to train students in logical thinking skills, a teaching goal stated above. Language used by students was controlled to a greater extent in this teacher's classes than in the others. On-the-spot error correction was also more in evidence in Language Arts and Social Studies lessons. Questions, too, were generally of a convergent as opposed to divergent type.

ii. The female teacher with whom the researcher is working is a native speaker of French from Québec. This is her second year at the same school in the Junior High bilingual program. This teacher had a background in pure sciences, with concentration in Biology, from a university in Québec. Error correction is also a major issue of concern for this teacher. She finds it abnormal that students in the eighth year of a bilingual program should continue to make the

glaring errors in both oral and written language that they do. This teacher spent, according to her calculations, on the average of two to three hours on the correction of the grade seven students' beaver projects. She expressed the feeling that she would feel "irresponsible" as a teacher, if she did not carry out this task. By the same token, she was also convinced that students would pay little or no attention to her written comments on their projects. During class, this teacher displayed more of a tendency to allow students to 'struggle' and 'ramble' when attempting to communicate ideas in French. Error correction was less "rapid-fire" or instantaneous. Instead of asking other students in the class to supply the correct word or structure to the speaker, she generally provided the necessary information herself and then proceeded with the plan of her lesson.

I. Teachers' General Comments about the Bilingual Program

Both of these teachers felt overburdened by the number of lesson preparations which they had to do. For example, Math, Science, FSL courses at several levels in the case of one person, Social Studies (English and French), Language Arts and Physical Education in the case of another. These teachers are aware that the needs of students within one class grouping vary considerably, from individual to individual. Some form of differentiated programming is necessary, but time is lacking so activities of this type are not developed. Teachers are also concerned by the lack of resources in

French. On the English side, many possibilities exist, but limitations are severe on the French side. Teachers are concerned that by struggling with inferior or limited resources in French, they may unwittingly but necessarily create the impression for students that French is somehow "inferior" or "more limited" in certain domains than English. Student motivation may subsequently deteriorate as a result. The major concerns of both teacher participants which are summarized in this Observational Record reappear in the interview data as guiding themes for an analysis and interpretation of the grade seven bilingual classroom portrayed in the study.

APPENDIX III

LANGUAGE UTILIZATION RECORD

TEACHER: DATE: TIME: SUBJECT:

ACTIVITY	TIME	FRENCH					ENGLISH					COMMENTS
		L	S	R	W	Other	L	S	R	W	Other	

APPENDIX IV

RESEARCH STUDY PROTOCOL MATERIALS: STUDENTS

Category	Major Indicators	Specific Questions
A. Curricular Difficulties Perceived by Students Resulting from the Study of Core Subjects in French	1. Comprehension of difficulties resulting from Vocabulary in the Second Language a) teaching approach b) student learning activities 2. Understanding the Basic Concepts a) the Second Language factor b) the age factor c) thinking processes 3. Facilitating Understanding through Direct Experiences 4. Actualizing new Vocabulary in the Second Language	1. a) How does your teacher introduce new vocabulary in the core subject areas (French Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies) to you, the students? b) What activities do you do to learn the new vocabulary i) at school ii) at home 2. a) Is it the same or different learning subjects such as Math or Science in French as compared to your subjects in English? i) If it is different in any way, please describe the differences. ii) Why do you think these differences exist? b) Compare your work in Science last year, in the spring term, to this term's work in the same subject. Is the work you are doing now easier, about as difficult or more difficult than last year's?

Category	Major Indicators	Specific Questions
A. (... Cont'd ...)		2. c) Do you think directly in French, without translating from English when you are solving problems in Math? i) Do you count in French and calculate answers to equations? ii) Do you think in French when answering questions in Science or Social Studies? 3. Do practical activities such as field trips, experiments, model building, or debates help you to understand the work better in your core subjects in French? i) If yes, can you say why and give an example? 4. a) When and in what ways do you use the new vocabulary learned in French core subject areas? i) in classroom activities ii) in student activities outside the class b) Do you participate in any social activities in French outside the classroom such as French summer camps, French film club, etc.?

Category	Major Indicators	Specific Questions
B. Patterns of Second Language Usage in School as Influenced by Curriculum	1. Classroom Communication a) teacher b) classmates c) attitude toward the Second Language d) limitations for expression in the Second Language 2. Homework assignments 3. Researching Projects a) reading b) availability of materials c) composition process	1. a) When do you talk to your teacher about material being taught in the classroom? i) How easy is it to ask questions in French about the work you are doing? b) When do you talk to other classmates about material being taught? ii) Is it easy to discuss the work with them in French? c) How do you feel when you use French in class to express ideas in Science, Math, Social Studies or French Language Arts? d) Can you say "pretty well" what you want to in French, or are you limited in certain ways and in certain areas? i) Can you give some examples of times you felt frustrated by your limitations in French? 2. When you are preparing homework assignments in French, do you think in French? i) when doing equations in Math ii) when answering written questions in Science iii) when writing a paragraph in French language composition

Category	Major Indicators	Specific Questions
B. (... Cont'd ...)		3. a) When you are researching a Social Studies project, do you read material in French only, English only, or in both languages? b) Is it easier, the same, or harder to find reference material on topics in French, as compared with English? c) If you have had to do a lot of research in English for a French Social Studies project, does it make it easier, the same, or harder i) to understand the main ideas found in resource books ii) to compose the written text of the project?
C. Impact of the Program on Student Activities Outside the Classroom	1. Homework a) amount. b) commitment to complete c) purpose of homework 2. Extra-Curricular Activities and Hobbies a) kinds b) time spent	1. About how much homework do you have to do daily in the core area subjects in French? a) Is this a decrease, an increase, or about the same amount from last year? b) Do you do the homework that is required of you all the time, most of the time, or rarely? c) What do you think is the purpose of these homework assignments?

Category	Major Indicators	Specific Questions
C. (... Cont'd ...)	3. Social Relationships a) source of friends b) choice of friends c) effect on home life	2. a) What kinds of extra-curricular activities/sports/hobbies do you participate in after school and on weekends? b) Has there been any change in the amount of time you spend on these activities as a result of being a part of the French bilingual program this year? 3. a) Do you find most of your friends "inside" the French bilingual program or outside of it? i) why do you think this is so? b) How does your participation in the bilingual program influence your choice of friends? c) Does your participation in the bilingual program affect your life at home with your parents, brothers or sisters? i) in what ways, please give an example of what you mean.
D. Student Attitudes Toward the Effects of the Bilingual Program on Extra-Curricular Activities	1. Homework allotments French Program/English Program 2. Student feelings with regard to the amount of time available for Extra-Curricular Activities	1. Do you think that students in the French bilingual program receive: i) less homework ii) the same amount of homework iii) or more homework than students in the English program? iv) what are your reasons for saying this?

Category	Major Indicators	Specific Questions
D.	3. Feelings about Achievement	2. Do you have enough time, outside of school, for your extra-curricular activities, sports and hobbies? a) If not, why not? b) Do you feel that you are missing out on something, because your time after school is so limited? Please explain why you say that.
(... Cont'd ...)	4. Motivation for Participating in Bilingual Program	3. a) How important are "good marks" to you? b) Do the marks which you receive in your French core subjects influence the way you think about the French program in school? c) Do the marks which you receive in your English subjects influence the way you think about those subjects and the teachers who teach them?
		4. What are YOUR reasons for wanting to acquire French as a Second Language?

APPENDIX V

RESEARCH STUDY PROTOCAL MATERIALS: — TEACHERS

Category	Major Indicators	Specific Questions
A. Curricular Difficulties Perceived by Teachers Based on Program as Presently Structured	1. Description of Materials Used a) texts b) amount of materials c) sources	1. a) What prescribed curriculum materials are you using for the core subject areas which you teach? b) Are adequate back-up resources available to you in these subject areas? c) Where do you obtain your back-up resources? Please provide specific examples.
	2. Teacher Attitudes toward Materials a) teacher interest b) student interest c) level of difficulty - language d) level of difficulty - concepts	2. a) Are the unit topics within subject areas interesting to YOU? b) Do you think that the unit topics are interesting to your STUDENTS? c) Are the materials which you describe of an appropriate level of difficulty in French for your students? d) Are the materials used of an appropriate level of difficulty in terms of content?
	3. Teacher Modification of Program a) teacher activities b) rationale for modification	3. a) Have you modified the curriculum materials for your subject area in any way so far this year? b) Why did you find it necessary to make these changes?
	4. Ongoing Program Development a) opportunities b) needs c) teacher interest	

Category	Major Indicators	Specific Questions
A. (... Cont'd ...)		4. a) What opportunities have you had so far this year to modify program with other bilingual teachers at your grade level? b) In your view, what is the most pressing need in curriculum development at this level for the subject areas which you teach. Please be specific. c) Are you interested in participating in curriculum development projects? Why and under what conditions?
B. Curricular Difficulties Perceived by Teachers Based on the Second Language Acquisition Process	1. Difficulties Arising from the Second Language Factor a) teacher activities b) student activities c) relationship of use of French in specific subject areas 2. Difficulties Arising from Course Content and Student Understanding a) differences between content difficulty and language difficulty b) teacher activities c) student activities	1. a) In what ways does the French language cause difficulties for your students? e.g. vocabulary structures tenses b) What do you do about difficulties stemming from the use of French in particular subject areas? e.g. teaching procedures c) What kinds of activities do you expect students to do when encountering language difficulties in a particular subject area?

Category	Major Indicators	Specific Questions
B. (... Cont'd ...)	3. Difficulty as it affects students of different ability levels.	2. In what ways does course content cause students difficulty? a) What are the differences between content or concept difficulties and language difficulties? b) What do you do about content difficulties experienced by students? c) What do you expect your students to do about these kinds of difficulties?
	4. Difficulty and its effect on Patterns of Language Use in School a) teacher approaches b) rationale for these approaches	3. How do language difficulties and content difficulties affect different types of students in your class?
		4. In what ways do difficulties experienced by students affect their use of French in school? a) Do you use particular teaching approaches or activities to enhance the use of French in school by your students? If so, please describe your techniques. b) Why do you use these methods? c) How much French do you think your students use in school, outside of the classroom situation?

Category	Major Indicators	Specific Questions
C. Impact of the French Bilingual Program on Teacher Activities Outside the Classroom	1. Teacher Preparation Activities a) types of activities b) amount of time spent on preparation	1. a) What kinds of teacher preparation activities have you done to implement your program so far this year? e.g. translation of English materials into French researching unit topics production of audio-visual aids, etc. b) On the average, how much time per night do you spend on classroom preparation i) during the week ii) on the weekends
	2. Teacher Qualifications Necessary a) professional training b) attitude toward profession training c) bilingual teacher qualities d) comparison bilingual teacher qualities/English teacher qualities	2. a) What kind of profession training is required to help teachers effectively teach in the bilingual program? b) In what ways did your own training prove useful to you in your present position? In what ways could it have been strengthened to provide you with greater help in your present role? c) What teacher qualities are essential to effectively teach in this program? d) In what ways do you think that the qualities which you mentioned differ in any way from the qualities of a good teacher in the regular English program?

Category	Major Indicators	Specific Questions
D. Teacher Attitudes Toward the Bilingual Program	1. Attitudes toward the Bilingual Program a) rewards and satisfactions in teaching this program b) frustrations experienced in teaching this program c) motivation to continue within the program	1. a) What are the satisfactions for you in teaching this program? Do you think that they differ from the ones teachers might experience in the regular English program? b) What are some of the frustrations you experience in teaching this program? Do they differ from the ones teachers might experience in the regular English program? c) What are some of the rewards you have experienced which would persuade you to continue teaching in this program? What are some of the deterrents which would prevent you from continuing in this program? d) Would you recommend this type of teaching to a friend and why?

APPENDIX VI

SAMPLES OF STUDENT INTERVIEW SUMMARIES

A. Interpretive Summary of Student Interview with S. 7
Nov. 15, 1982

S. 7 [S. = Student] puts the emphasis on communicating through speaking in a second language. When she thinks of communication, she thinks of travel and contact with French-speaking people in France and Québec. She has had the opportunity to speak French this fall with an exchange student from Alsace who has been living in her home for three months. There is a sense that language brings people together in conversation in S. 7's comments.

A difficulty with the French bilingual program as it exists right now, is the lack of French reference materials in the library. English research notes must be translated into French. S. 7 gave two opinions about the translation task. On the one hand she said it was difficult. On the other hand she said it helped increase vocabulary in French because it was necessary to learn the French equivalent for English terms by looking them up in the dictionary.

Another difficulty with learning French in a bilingual program of this type has to do with vocabulary loss. Because the school atmosphere just isn't very French outside of particular classrooms,

sometimes you lose vocabulary that once was very familiar to you. French Language Arts and Social Studies are better subjects for acquiring new vocabulary in the second language because they are more about communicating than say, Math or Science. Math and Science are seen as being more "fact oriented." Sometimes it's hard to get personal ideas across in French Language Arts or Social Studies because of a lack of vocabulary in French, as opposed to English. It would be easier to express opinions and converse generally in English in such situations.

A third difficulty which relates back to the use of French encyclopedias in the library was mentioned. Sometimes confusion is created in S. 7's mind when the words used in French in reference books are not the same as the ones used by teachers in class. [This said in reference to the Groelier series.]

S. 7 is satisfied with the ease with which she can speak French. She is certainly a lot more fluent than the grade seven people who are just starting French this year. However, in a bilingual classroom, S. 7 rarely uses French with her classmates. English predominates with them because it is simply more natural to speak with English speaking kids in their first language. There is a sense that to act differently would be to "put on airs" or act like a snob towards them.

S. 7 indicated that students' probably do a lot of thinking in English, even in a bilingual program. Most "number work" in Math, for example, is done in her head in English. It is easier, however, to think in French when notes and other materials are in French. Then there is no need to "switch" from one language to another.

S. 7 does indicate that she feels different from the kids in the grade seven English classes. She thinks learning two languages at once offers an "intellectual challenge" which she accepts. She thinks this challenge creates a more mature attitude among French bilingual students as compared to the English students. These feelings tend to separate the two groups and also give the impression that one group (the French group) is in some sense "better" than the other.

S. 7 expressed concern about the lack of possibility in the bilingual program as it is presently run for increasing French vocabulary with which to converse. She suggests that an option subject in French (Art or Music) might increase learning possibilities for new vocabulary.

S. 7 enjoys speaking French and the extra challenge which the program brings to her.

B. Interpretive Summary of Student Interview with S. 10 and S. 11
Nov. 9, 1982

The value of knowing a second language, as stated on numerous occasions by S. 10 and S. 11, is the possibility of communication with others. The bilingual French program provides students with opportunities to speak French, although when talking directly about the program's worth in the future these two students kept mentioning travel opportunities to Francophone countries in Europe and elsewhere, not specifically Canada and possibilities for conversation with native speakers, not English speakers of French.

S. 10 expressed the view that French was not considered by him as a "second" language: that is a language which is secondary in importance to English, but simply as another way to communicate. His mother is of French descent and he claims to speak French with her at home.

In discussing difficulty, both students felt that they had no difficulties with French as a language when using it in class on a daily basis. In the early stages of the elementary program in grade two, S. 11 experienced some difficulty in understanding the rapid speech of a native Francophone teacher. However, these difficulties have disappeared by grade seven. Writing in French is difficult though. Correct French sentences are hard to produce because the structures are frequently the reverse of English. This is particulary noticeable when students are attempting to translate from English to French.

S. 10 and S. 11 expressed some concern about subject specific-content vocabulary in Science or Social Studies. They seem to feel that they haven't got a good enough understanding of French vocabulary used because they don't know the English equivalents for these terms. English vocabulary is seen by students as being more reliable and authentic in these situations as well as being a necessary prerequisite for higher studies.

In order to get students to make maximum use of French in class, teachers invent games or contests, or else devise some kind of punishment for non-use of the second language where it is normally required. S. 10 and S. 11 believe that intensive practise of the language in class time has improved their communicative fluency, but

do not deny that artificial elements such as teacher pressure, or a system of rewards and punishments provided the impetus for students to do so.

The two languages are not learned or mastered on an equal footing. Students have considerable difficulty in keeping the two systems separate in their minds, in their speech and in their writing. If one language is emphasized more than another in class (e.g. French over English), skills in the lesser used language tend to deteriorate.

Because the school and community environments are English language dominant, English is the language which prevails in students' communication with peers. English is seen as more natural in these situations. Both S. 10 and S. 11 said that they were satisfied with the level of communicative ability which they have acquired in French. They don't feel limited in the expression of their ideas because they can say what they mean by explaining it more. However, there is also the sense that ideas expressed outside of class in English to adults and peers are more complex and detailed because fewer limitations exist.

Being in the bilingual program is more work and affects students' marks. Students expressed the view that their marks could be higher if they were taking all subjects in English. The language acquisition process is seen to be a long and difficult one. S. 10 and S. 11 recommend that students start early.

Material in English for projects is easier to understand and more readily available than in French. Students do much translation from English to French when preparing written projects. English is

used as a "back-up language" when students don't understand in French.

S. 10 and S. 11 engage in intermittent activities in French outside of school on an irregular basis. T.V. or radio in French is not very important because there is so much more choice in English which makes it more attractive.

S. 10 and S. 11 felt that they mixed well with all grade seven's - no matter what program they were in. They felt the school administration exaggerates the so-called "conflicts" between English seven's and French seven's. Nonetheless, the language used to describe individuals from the two programs - e.g. such catch words as "the English" or "the French" would tend to suggest that some form of segregation exists and that language of instruction is the barrier which causes it.

APPENDIX VII

SAMPLE OF A TEACHER INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Interpretive Summary of Teacher Interview with Teacher B
December 7, 1982

A. Teacher Perceptions of Students' Difficulties

Teacher B felt that there was a fairly significant degree of "interference" of English in French speech and writing among bilingual students. Teacher B also suspects that the French language has some influence on students' writing patterns in English as well although he is unable to offer conclusive proof for this. The writing skills of bilingual students in French are heavily influenced by the students phonetic grounding in the language as reflected by their spelling of various familiar words. Teacher B feels that the major difficulty for these students in written work is the transferal of what they know in theory to what they are able to use in practice. Students understand where their errors lie and are able to correct them in remedial or grammar focused exercises, but their own productive output is not as accurate as it should be at the time of composing. Teacher B also perceives a gap of understanding in French compared with English when more abstract notions are being communicated to students. He feels that they hold on to the basics very well, but that more esoteric concepts are hard to get across in

the second language. Teacher B felt that students' experiences of difficulty tended to divide the class into two groups. The average and above-average students respond eagerly to the challenge of learning in French and forge ahead in their studies. The small minority of students who fall into the lower achievement group become easily discouraged by their difficulties and display increasing amounts of frustration if their difficulties remain unresolved. Lower achievers tend to close in on themselves to a certain degree and are very reticent about sharing their problems with teachers. Teacher B used the words "pulling" and "tearing" to describe the feelings of those students who fell into the weakest group in the class. He felt that the very weakest students should not be part of a bilingual class because their difficulties were only augmented by having to cope with a second language. It is parental pressure which keeps such students in the bilingual program. Generally speaking, the average and above-average students who experience a problem of understanding in French will seek clarification through questioning. The weakest students are reluctant to talk about their difficulties and so they tend to keep quiet.

B. Handling Students' Difficulties

In handling students difficulties, Teacher B re-directs questions back to the student speaker as a method of error correction. His purpose in doing this is twofold: first, to get the

students to think about what they are saying and how they are expressing it in an effort to have them correct their own errors, and second, to remove the focus from the teacher as sole linguistic resource and distribute that role among class members. When concepts are somewhat hard to grasp the teacher will attempt to explain the idea in a variety of different ways in French. If this method fails, he will resort to English to facilitate understanding and rapid communication. A lot of pre-teaching of new vocabulary goes on before a topic is begun so that students have the necessary linguistic baggage to work with in class.

C. Characteristics of L2 Use in a Bilingual Setting

According to Teacher B, students in the bilingual program identify French with specific teachers and specific classroom contexts. French is not used with other teachers who may be speakers of the language, but who are nonetheless outside of the bilingual students' world; nor is it used in the hallways or other parts of the school. If it does occur here, speakers are often slighted by the English student group. This teacher, while regretting the social context of a bilingual school, is convinced that the program does produce bilingual individuals: students who are, for the most part capable of expressing their meaning in the second language. However, the extent to which they retain their French in the years ahead is contingent upon good program planning at the high school level by administrators and also by the personal

decisions which the students themselves will make in the future regarding the use of French and its relevance for their lives. This teacher attempts to enhance the use of French in a positive way, by providing students with different comparisons or contexts for general discussion in which personal ideas can be related in French. Such discussion can be quite eclectic and draw from the arts, or the everyday world of objects and events which students can relate to. On the negative side, students who are caught speaking too much English during French classes are made to copy out dictionary pages. From the point of view of 'cultural context,' Teacher B feels it is much easier and in the long run probably more meaningful to run bilingual programs in places such as Montréal or Ottawa, where the language is seen and lived by many in situ - as part of the everyday realm of experience.

D. Curriculum Concerns and Problems

In Social Studies, only a small number of materials are translated into French. The panorama of choice which students have in the second language is severely limited when compared to English resources. As a result, students become bored with some of the topics. Part of the reason for student boredom has to do with the repetition found within certain themes. Teacher B is discouraged with the values oriented approach, as opposed to the knowledge based approach. Students in Junior High are not yet equipped to do "Sociology"; they require a more concrete, factually-oriented base. Because of the problem of paucity of resource materials, as well as

quality, the bilingual teacher is frequently faced with the dilemma: Subject matter first or language of instruction first.

In French Language Arts, the lack of structurally solid grammar base prevents students from assimilating the reasons why certain structures are the way they are. The same errors continually repeat themselves in students' work. There seems to be no 'framework' for students to hang their knowledge of particular rules on.

E. Teacher Strategies in Coping With Curriculum Concerns

Teacher B adapts and modifies what curriculum materials are available in French to those which can be utilized from the school library. This may mean that in order to stimulate interest in learning and to 'sustain' the topic, English films or film strips are added. A 'sensitization process' with regard to written errors in French goes on during whole class discussions where student work is analysed and corrected on the board. Otherwise, it is a daily struggle to fill in the gaps for resources. The teachers' energy and ingenuity determine how satisfactorily curriculum difficulties are overcome. The task is on which is often carried on in isolation from other teachers.

F. Teacher Perceptions of His/Her Role as a Bilingual Educator

Teacher B's satisfactions as a bilingual educator are "process" or "communication" oriented as opposed to "skill" oriented within

particular subject disciplines. The fact that students do communicate reasonably well in French to sympathetic adult listeners is a thrill in itself. On the other hand, Teacher B experiences a certain feeling of disappointment about the repeated major errors which crop up in student language. Aware of what is "standard" or native-like and surrounded by what is not bilingual educators struggle to close the gap daily, in a milieu which is not conducive to linguistic development. Teacher B feels that Anglophones are helped in their task in that they can predict some of the errors which occur, but their disappointment with persistent errors is felt just as keenly as that of Francophone colleagues.

There is a sense that more direction is needed from program administrators to organize the development of curricula as well as to assess programs on an ongoing basis. Co-ordination, co-operation and integration are badly needed by bilingual educators in classroom settings.